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TRAVELS AND ADVENTURES

IN

MEXICO:

IN

THE COURSE OF JOURNEYS OF UPWARD OF 2500 MILES, PERFORMED ON FOOT.

GIVING

AN ACCOUNT OF THE MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF THE PEOPLE, AND THE AGRICULTURAL AND MINERAL RESOURCES OF THAT COUNTRY.

BY WILLIAM W. CARPENTER,

LATE OF THE U. S. ARMY.

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PREFACE.

In taking the liberty of laying before the public the following narrative, I deem it proper to make a few preliminary remarks. This is the first effort at composition, destined for the public eye, that I have ever attempted. I therefore beg my readers to remember that they must not expect to meet with high-wrought descriptions or well-rounded periods, but a plain matter-of-fact narrative, drawn from my note-book, which was often penned by stealth or in haste, and always obliged to be reduced to such a small compass as to enable me to conceal it in an inside pocket. The notes I was compelled to make with a miserable pencil and on worse paper. Combine these difficulties, gentle reader, with a hungry stomach, an aching head, and oftimes a miserable stable or shed for a night's shelter, and you will then have some idea of the circumstances under which I have often been compelled to write my notes.

I venture to lay the ensuing narrative before the public because I believe that it will tend to increase the stock of useful knowledge regarding a country of great natural resources with which we are now closely connected, and that it contains much to gratify the

lovers of adventures and incidents. I have been placed in circumstances which afforded me unusual opportunities of learning the character, customs, and domestic habits of the higher classes among the Mexicans. My extreme poverty and apparent insignificance prevented any suspicions of future disclosures; and I frequently had access to their domestic circles when those cloaks of reserve were laid aside which are generally worn before foreigners. My path has also led me among all the humbler classes of society, whose pursuits and dispositions I have carefully observed, while they considered me unworthy of notice.

In the course of my journeys I have passed through several towns seldom described by travelers, such as Salamanca, Guanahuato, Guadalajara, Ahuacatlan, and Tepic; and I have likewise examined the mineral and agricultural resources of the various sections which I visited. At the same time, the narrative abounds with incidents. I trust, therefore, that my readers will have no reason to regret the time they may spend in perusing the following pages.

I can not conclude these remarks without observing that I consider myself indebted solely to a benignant Providence for the preservation of my life amid the numerous perils through which I have passed. I was a stranger, destitute of money, and surrounded by numerous bands of troops, which were constantly scouring the roads and passes. I was subject to the jealous scrutiny of every prying alcalde and his

horde of myrmidons, while I had to encounter the innumerable parties of banditti with which that country is infested; men who would never scruple to rob a traveler of his last shirt or shilling; and I have frequently suffered the extremes of hunger and thirst, besides being exposed to heat and cold, and the heavy rains and pestiferous dews of a tropical climate, with clothing hardly sufficient to cover my nakedness.

Etna, N. Y., 24th April, 1851.

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TRAVELS AND ADVENTURES

IN MEXICO.

CHAPTER I.

Proceed to Brazos Santiago with the Kentucky Volunteer Regiment. —Occurrences there.—Remove to Burrita.—Appearance of the Country.—Soil.—Heavy Rains.—Occupations.—Alarms.—Death of an Officer.—Remove to Camargo.—Soil, and state of Agriculture. —Advantages of Camargo.—Troops concentrate there.—Depart for Monterey.—Wooden Crosses.—Changed Appearance of the Country.—Silver Mine.—Canales.—Mariné.—First Firing.—Incidents at the Battle of Monterey.

At the commencement of the Mexican war I was at Louisville, Kentucky, when orders were received to raise in that state a regiment of volunteers, to proceed at once to the scene of action. Having many friends who had volunteered, I was by them easily persuaded to do the same; and in the short space of one week we were on the way to New Orleans, whence we shipped for Brazos Santiago in two vessels, which were towed by a steamer into the Gulf. When we were at a sufficient distance from the land to catch a breeze, the steamer left us, and we arrived at the Brazos in four days. The other vessel had arrived the day before, and we hastened to join our comrades.

The only buildings were one belonging to the quarter-master's or commissary department, and an occasional shanty for a sutler, or some other adventurer who acted on his own account. The island is low and very level, and so destitute of soil that no grass or weeds grow on it. On the side next the Gulf are several very high sand-hills, which have been blown up by the heavy winds from the sea. There were no wells, but for water we dug little holes in the sand, from three to six feet deep. Into these would run sufficient water to enable us to take it up with a cup. It was brackish, but we used it, for want of any other. The sea furnished us with oysters and fish, and it required only a slight exertion to obtain a plentiful supply.

We drilled two hours every day, and soon became tolerable proficients in the use of arms. Reports were in circulation that the Mexicans intended to make a descent on the island; and picket-guards were stationed at a distance from the camp. One night the officers, being desirous of testing the capabilities of the men, determined to create an alarm. Accordingly, when the night was far advanced, and all were buried in profound sleep, the long roll was heard to beat. Instantly all was life and confusion: loud cries of "*Turn out! turn out!*" were heard in every direction. We formed at once into a line on the parade ground; and by the light of the moon we could distinctly see the St. Louis regiment (which was there also) formed in battle array. Our officers rode up and down the line, exhorting us to keep cool, and not be excited, as the Mexicans did not come. There

was no excuse for keeping us waiting any longer, so we were dismissed, the officers telling us to be ready to turn out at a moment's warning. We turned into our tents to take another sleep, and no sooner had all sunk into forgetfulness than another alarm was given. We were instantly on our feet, and fell into line as before. But we were kept only a few minutes, when they dismissed us, and permitted us to sleep quietly until morning. It was said that these alarms were the result of bets between the officers of the two regiments, regarding the alacrity with which their respective commands would form into line; but I do not certainly know that such was the case. However, as our life was so monotonous here, it was well to spice it with a little variety.

The weather was very hot, and sickness prevailed to a considerable extent in the camp; but arrangements could not be made for removing till we received orders from General Taylor. During the interval, some jovial youths entertained their comrades by playing practical jokes on some sutler or rum-seller, such as the following. One day, some men belonging to the St. Louis regiment, assisted by some from ours, went to the rear of a rum shanty, and made an opening in the board partition till they got access to a brandy barrel, whence they retailed it at sixpence a glass. After some time, one of the young men went in and asked the sutler how he sold brandy. On being told "a shilling a glass," he replied that others sold it for sixpence. "Where?" said the sutler. The young man told him to follow, and he would show him. He followed to the rear of his own build-

ing, and saw them selling from his own brandy barrel. Whereupon he began to swear, curse, and rave; but this only made them sell more brandy; and those who had no money got it gratis. At last, when the sutler found that neither curses nor threats produced any effect, he bought them off by treating all hands.

While lying here, the rainy season commenced. The days were usually clear, and after dark it commenced raining, accompanied with vivid flashes of lightning and terrific peals of thunder, which frequently ended by giving us a thorough drenching. But the warm sunny days amply repaid us for these little inconveniences.

We remained here three weeks, when orders were received to remove up the Rio Grande to a place called Burrita, distant fourteen miles. As soon as all were ready, the right wing moved on as far as the mouth of the river, and the day following, the left wing having reached them, we put our baggage on a steam-boat to convey it up the river. After resting a while we crossed over to the other side, and for the first time put our feet on Mexican ground.

As soon as all were over we commenced our line of march. The country, as far as the eye could reach, was level; and that portion of it next the river was so low as to be entirely buried under water, and there being no way to avoid it, we were forced to march through it. This continued for near one fourth of the way, after which we had a good road. There were no houses on the way, but an occasional cultivated field. The land was rich and easy of cultiva-

tion, and would, by proper tillage, yield the farmer a rich return for his labor; but it seems as though all its occupants wished for in this world was enough to eat from day to day, never thinking of providing for the future. About sunset we arrived at the place destined for our encampment. This was a high bank from twenty to thirty rods wide, and some miles in length. The ground having been assigned off to the companies, we went down to the boat, brought up our tents and other baggage, while some of our comrades were collecting wood with which to cook our supper; after which, being excessively fatigued with our hard march, we lay down to sleep. The weather by this time had become very cloudy, and a heavy rain was expected. During the night it came down in a manner that was never seen before by any of us. Our tents were soon wet through, and in a short time it became as bad inside as outside; still, we endured all the inconveniences arising from this state of the weather with great resignation.

In the morning it became clear for a few moments, but it soon commenced raining with increased violence. Many had succeeded in building a fire to cook their breakfast, but the rain came on so soon that it drove them all into their quarters and put out their fire; others, in the mean time, had been out and gathered weeds and bushes to place on the bottom of their tents to keep their blankets out of the mud—an excellent precaution, as it afterward proved to be of great service. It continued to rain six days without intermission, during which time we scarcely saw the sun, and, as no cooking could be done out of

doors, we made a fire in the tent and boiled our coffee, fried our meat, &c. In the mean while our bread had given out; and so hard was it raining, that none could be issued. At length it slackened sufficient for them to serve out rations. For a few days our situation was truly unpleasant—our clothes were all wet, and there were no dry ones in our knapsacks; our blankets and fire-arms also were wet, and the latter rusty. The camp ground was something like a bed of mortar. As soon as the sun came out warm, however, every thing was made right; clothes were dried, fire-arms were put in order, our quarters were cleaned out, and soon every thing assumed quite a respectable appearance. We were encamped a little above the village of Burrita, where there was a regiment of Louisiana volunteers, and above us, further up the river, was another regiment from the same state. The village above alluded to was a small town, or rather rancho; the houses were miserably-built hovels, not capable of protecting the inmates from the pelting rain. On the land that was cultivated there were very fine crops of cotton, which the soil will produce in great abundance, likewise corn, wheat, and various tropical fruits.

On one side of the camp was a chaparral which afforded us wood for a long time; and our water was taken from the river, very muddy, but when settled it was good and sweet. Steam-boats were constantly plying on the river between Camargo and its mouth, carrying provisions to that point, as General Taylor was concentrating all his force there preparatory to moving on Monterey. Occasionally we received pa-

pers from Louisville, by which means we had some little knowledge of their doings at home; and as reading matter was very scarce in the regiment, every paper was eagerly sought after by all the boys. A portion of every day was spent in drilling, in which exercise we in time became tolerably proficient.

We lay here some time, nothing occurring to disturb the even tenor of our life but an occasional report that peace was made or about to be made. This all rejoiced at, as we had become heartily tired of this inactive state, and a change of any kind was greatly desired; but a homeward-bound course would have been more acceptable to us than all others. At length it became evident to our officers that another camping-ground was necessary, as we had cut all the wood that was near us, and for our daily supply were forced to carry it a great distance. However, a circumstance occurred before we left that deserves notice. On the opposite side of the marsh that was in the rear of our camp was another high range of hills; across this marsh it was not more than two miles to this ridge. One day a lieutenant of one of the companies was looking over on these hills through a glass, and discovered what was supposed to be a large body of horsemen drilling. The alarm was instantly given, and that night a detail of thirty men was made from the rifle company to go thither and make what discoveries it could. The whole of that night was spent in preparing cartridges for the expedition, and early the next morning they started. They were forced to take a circuitous route, to avoid as much as

possible the deep waters of the marsh. They took a supply of provisions, expecting to be gone two days. During this time great excitement prevailed in the camp, in anticipation of an attack from this supposed enemy. Toward evening of the second day they returned, and reported that they saw nothing but a drove of wild horses that were prancing about at leisure, and thus passed away this danger; but there was another circumstance that occurred at or near this time that filled the regiment with gloom. Captain B., of the ninth company, went to Matamoras on business connected with the regiment; he was expected to be gone only a few days; a week passed, and he did not return. Then fears for his safety were entertained; and, as he proceeded there by land, it was not known whether he fell at the hands of the rancheros, or received his death from some of the gamblers that infested that city. A search was made for the body afterward, but it never was found.

At length we began to make preparations to move up to Camargo; a few companies, with the sick, went up on a boat, the balance by land. By water the distance was near four hundred miles; by land, about one hundred. We had been at that place eight weeks, and right glad were we to leave. We put our camp-baggage on board, at least all that was going by the boat, went on board, and soon we were wending our way nearer the scene of bloodshed.

The scenery on the banks of the river is beautifully diversified. There are low bottoms, with a soil unequaled in the world for fertility. The timber was not very large, but beautiful in its diminutiveness.

The climate is so even and regular that two crops can be raised in a year, one succeeding the other; but, notwithstanding all these advantages, no more is produced than is indispensably necessary to support life. The reason of this state of things will hereafter be stated. At length we arrived at Matamoras, where we lay all night. From our position we could see but little of the city, but we frequently saw some marks of violence that was done by the balls during the bombardment of Fort Brown.

We lay a short distance above the city, and next morning we made a start up the river. We could not proceed fast because of the rapidity of the current. There was frequently a rancho seen, with a small cultivated piece of ground around it. At these ranchoes we stopped for wood, for which government paid from two and a half to three dollars per cord; by this means many of the Mexicans who were poor now have their pockets lined with money. In four days we reached the mouth of the San Juan, a large stream emptying into the Rio Grande. About six miles from its mouth, on a high bank, is Camargo, once a large town and a place of good business, but now in ruins, having been swept away by the overflowing of the river. At present only a few houses remain, and all of them are in a dilapidated condition. The place is well situated for trade, as all the merchandise that is bound for Monterey, Saltillo, and other towns of similar importance, would come through here. The river is very wide, and sufficiently deep to admit the largest class of steam-boats, even during low water. With these advantages Camargo

would, in the hands of an industrious and enterprising people, soon become a great commercial city. The surrounding country is healthy, and the soil fertile. From the Gulf upward the land gradually rises, and is mostly free from hills. At the time of our arrival there were several regiments of regulars here, which had been here some time, and likewise some of the famous Texan Rangers. All the boats that were on the river were busily engaged in bringing up soldiers and provisions. This was in August. Every few days troops were arriving, and our available force soon amounted to about seven thousand men. We here were again cheered with the hopes of peace being soon made; but, as before, it proved illusory.

At length we were mustered, and received our clothing-money, being the first we had hitherto received. All those regiments which had been ordered on to Monterey had been moved over the river. At length, every thing being ready, the army moved on amid the cheers of those who were left behind. The country still continued rising, but was regular and gradual in its ascent. There was more and heavier timber than on the portions we had left. One thing surprised us much: there were wooden crosses placed by the road side at frequent intervals; for these we could not account. At first we supposed that they were land-marks denoting distances; but then we saw as many as four or five in one place, and this destroyed that supposition. Afterward, as I became more acquainted with the manners and customs of the inhabitants, this was explained; and in my travels through this country, I saw that it was a thing of very com-

mon occurrence. It is a custom of this people to place a wooden cross over a body that has been found dead, wherever it may be, whether in the field or the road; and as murders are of frequent occurrence, these monuments of cruelty and crime are to be seen in every highway and in every city; and frequently as many as four, five, or six, and sometimes more, were to be found within the space of one rod.

It was some forty leagues to Monterey, the place of our destination. In two days we passed Mier, a small place, but beautiful and regularly built, and is capable of being made very strong with little exertion. We encamped here one night, and then proceeded to Seralvo, which was just half way to Monterey. Before reaching this place, the high blue mountains of the Sierra Madre appeared in sight. Seralvo is situated near the foot of these mountains. Through the town flows a fine, clear, and beautiful stream, which empties its waters into the Rio Grande. It is said that near here, in one of these towering hills, is a silver mine of great value, that was once worked by a company from the United States; but they were forced to desist on account of a revolution in the country. For a long time it lay idle; at last another company attempted to reopen and work it. Their attempt proved fruitless; and, after spending several thousand dollars, they abandoned it to prosecute their enterprise elsewhere. It is on this road that Canales, the noted robber, commits his depredations. He had been outlawed by the Mexican government, and afterward received into its pay several times. He is a man of doubtful courage, but possesses good talents. It is

said that he was educated for the profession of the law; but, unfortunately, taking part on the wrong side in a revolution, he became outlawed; and since then he has been in command of an army as a bandit. The latter was his character at the time of which I am speaking; and on this march it is said that he came into the American camp, and went to the general's quarters, made himself known, and offered his services and those of his men in the approaching conflict. But the commander rejected his offer, saying that, sooner than receive his services, he would treat him as a highwayman. This story was in circulation in the camp, but I can not vouch for its truth. I was afterward told, however, while a prisoner, that at this time Canales was in the American camp several times, and was anxious to join the Americans, as were most of his men, but never did.

We stayed at this place one night. From hence most of our way lay through a rough and rocky road; the mountains on each side rising with towering tops, one vying with the other in its dizzy height. This was characteristic of the first day's march; the second was more even, but still rough, uneven, and uninhabited. The third day the road became level, and the soil very fertile. This day we passed through Mariné, the scene of a bloody massacre, as I shall hereafter relate. The fourth day we encamped within ten miles of Monterey. Next morning we made an early start: we had no sooner begun to move than the thundering roar of the cannon greeted our ears. The Texan Rangers were in the advance, and at this time in sight of the enemy, who commenced firing

on them at once. All was impatience and anxiety through the army to reach the scene of action as soon as possible, to participate in its dangers and its glories, the roaring of the cannon sounding more like martial music than the knell of death. We encamped that night about five miles from Monterey, by the side of some fine springs, and a most beautiful piece of wood, the only timber of the kind that can be seen in the valley. The next morning an attack was regularly commenced, the general dispositions of the battle were soon made, and each commander took his respective command, Brigadier-general Hemar, of Ohio, taking command of the brigade composed of the first regiments of the Kentucky and Ohio volunteers. The Kentucky regiment was detailed to guard a mortar, commanded by Captain Ramsay, and a better or more thorough-bred soldier could not be found.

The town appeared to be very strongly fortified. In front was a large fort, commonly called "*The Black Fort*," which name was given to it by its hoisting the black flag during the battle. At the west end of the town, on a very high hill, is the bishop's castle, another strongly-fortified point. Beyond that, on another hill, was placed a battery of two guns. At the east end of the town were several smaller fortifications, all of which were heavily mounted and well manned. Besides these, every street leading into the city was defended by a breastwork and two guns. Of this fact no one was aware until the town had been penetrated. Gen ral Worth was ordered to make an attempt on the bishc ?'s castle. He took three thousand men, and, taking a circuitous

route, he was concealed by the chapparal and the corn-fields, and in a few hours appeared in the rear, at the foot of this hill. In the mean time, the attack on the lower end of the town had been commenced. This was done more to draw their attention from General Worth than with a view of bringing on a regular engagement; but so impetuous was the onset of these volunteers, that it was found impossible to stop or recall them. They were the Mississippians and Tennessseans. The Ohio regiment was likewise with them. All these were but a short time out, and had had very little time to become acquainted with military tactics, and none of them had before seen an engagement. The battle raged with great fury; the roaring of the cannon was terrific. Captain Ramsay would occasionally throw a shell into them, doing terrible execution; and soon we saw their cavalry forming, preparing to charge on this mortar. They started, and had come some distance, when a shell was thrown into their midst, killing great numbers and throwing them into confusion, which forced them to return. They made one or two more attempts, but met with the same reception, after which they kept themselves quiet. This day's fight resulted in the capture of two forts by the Mississippians and Tennesseeans. During this time it rained in torrents.

Toward night of the second day, the left wing of our regiment, under the command of Major Sheppard, was ordered into town to take charge of these forts and relieve those that then occupied it. We were all cheered at this time by seeing the American colors flying on the castle. This occurred about twelve

o'clock. One loud shout rang in the air through our lines, so loud as to drown the thundering roar of the cannon. This was the first information that we had of the doings of General Worth. At last we proceeded to the fort of which we were to take charge; our road was greatly exposed; a cross fire was continually pouring into us, though fortunately doing little injury. But there were plenty of evidences to show that the work of death had been terrible at this point, as the ground was literally strewn with dead bodies. In a short time we reached our destination, where we were protected from the shots of the enemy. The fort, owing to the rain and the constant tramping, had become very muddy; but we were forced to make this our camping-place for the night, notwithstanding the shower of shot that was poured into us from forts adjacent, and by our neighborly friends the Mexicans. After dark a picket-guard was sent to a tan-yard, which was some fifteen rods from the fort.

During the night, rockets were fired by the enemy to discover this guard. They did not succeed until toward morning, when they immediately fired into the building, and wounded a man belonging to the tenth company. On this they came back to where the rest of us were. Soon daylight appeared, when the action commenced, which resulted in the capitulation of the town, after which the American flag proudly waved over the walls of Monterey. I was afterward told that Ampudia was tried by a court-martial; and why he was not cashiered is a wonder, for a greater coward never commanded an army. I was told this while at San Luis Potosi.

CHAPTER II.

Occurrences after the Capitulation of Monterey.—American Volunteers killed.—Mexican shot.—Course of General Taylor.—Mexican Outrages renewed.—Mode in which they were stopped.—Army advance to Saltillo.—A small Guard left at Monterey, of which I am One.—We start for Saltillo.—Adventures on the Way.—Haciendas.—Remarkable Spot.—False Alarm.—Saltillo.—The Cathedral.—Mier Prisoner.—Brigade return to Monterey.—Occupy the Citadel.—Occurrences at Monterey.—Start for Camargo, in a Guard, accompanying a Train of Mules.—Scenes and Occurrences by the Way.—Adventures of Captain Henry.—Meet a Train of Wagons at Seralvo, and return with them toward Monterey.—Fellow-travelers.—Attacked at Ramos by a strong Force under General Urrea.—The Escort taken Prisoners.—Many of the Teamsters killed.—Fate of a Fellow-traveler.—His Daughter.

After the capitulation of Monterey, order and peace were quickly restored. The Mexicans were soon ready to leave, and they marched out in regular order; and very frequently was to be seen in their ranks one who had formerly been a soldier in the American army. How changed was his condition! Then he was well fed, well clothed; and if he was sick, good care was taken of him; but now, how different! He was ragged and dirty, not half paid, and still worse fed, with base and degraded associates. In a short time the city was cleared of the Mexican troops, and the army proceeded to take their regular camping ground. General Worth and his division remained in the city. General Taylor, with the rest of the army, went to the woods and the springs before alluded to. Here

was abundance of wood and water. The inhabitants of the surrounding country soon became quite familiar with us, and a regular market was established, where bread, meat, and many fruits of tropical climates could be purchased at a cheap rate. For a long while all went on smoothly, nothing occurring to alarm us. At length, as though tired of this state of things, the Mexicans began to kill some of the volunteers, whom they found away from the camp alone. Several had thus been made away with, till at last a Mexican was shot. At this General Taylor became very angry, and made inquiry who it was that shot him. He was told that it was done by the Kentucky regiment; he became at once still more excited, and hastily ordered us to prepare to march to the rear of the army. A letter of remonstrance was sent to him, begging that a court of inquiry be ordered, and find out who was guilty, that he might be punished, and not punish an entire regiment for the crime of one individual. It was done; the man was found, and he received a dishonorable discharge. But on the part of the Mexicans this murdering system continued. At last one belonging to our regiment was brought in completely cut to pieces. This produced some murmuring and great dissatisfaction because effectual measures were not taken to prevent a repetition of them. Few words were spoken, but a deep feeling of vengeance pervaded all the companies. It only wanted a little more aggravation on their part to produce vengeance on ours; and this was not long wanting; for in a few days afterward, one belonging to the ninth company was found with his throat cut from ear to ear, and

otherwise horribly mutilated. This was enough. But now a difficulty presented itself. Immediately after the trial above alluded to, an order had been issued forbidding any man to pass out of his lines with his gun; therefore it now became their study in what manner to get their arms out with them. But a scheme was soon devised and executed in this manner. The soldiers were allowed to go to the stream, which was about ten rods from the line, to wash out their guns; they were not slow in taking advantage of this liberty. Those who were going would take their guns apart; one would put his lock in his pocket, and walk out with the barrel to wash it; another would put on a blanket, hide the stock under it, and follow after. In this manner some twenty guns were taken away; and as we were allowed to go where and when we pleased, the absent persons were not missed or suspected. A number of Mexicans were killed, and the next day still more, making in all about twenty. No inquiry whatever was made as to who the perpetrators were, but no more volunteers were killed. The Mexicans doubtless considered this a sufficient warning.

We were lying here in idleness and inactivity, amusing ourselves the best way we could, some by card-playing, others by trying feats of strength; all were anxious to return home, being heartily tired of camp life. But before this time, General Worth, with his command, had gone to Saltillo, and was fortifying it. We also heard of the return of General Santa Anna to Mexico. This was an important occurrence, as he would either make peace or prosecute the war

with greater vigor. In either case, it would be far better than the present state of suspense. But we did not long remain in doubt, for soon information was received that he was moving on Monterey with a large body of men. In the month of December, an express came into camp about two o'clock in the morning, and went to the quarters of the commanding officer. He delivered his message, and proceeded down to Camargo, without loss of time, to order up fresh troops from below. Major Sheppard, who was then in command, sent for the drummer to beat the long roll, but the drummer could not be found. He then came out on the parade ground, and with a loud voice cried, "*Turn out! turn out!*" several times. The alarm quickly spread, and soon from every quarter of the brigade was heard the cry, "*Turn out! turn out!*" We formed on the parade ground, and a motley-looking set we were. Rising from our warm beds and going into the cold air, all began to shiver as though suffering from an attack of the fever and ague; but into line we went, some appearing without hats, others without coats, and nearly all without shoes; so great was the confusion that these could not be found. We were ordered to cook our breakfast as soon as possible. We were to leave Monterey by daybreak for Saltillo, as the Mexicans were advancing on that point under the command of the one-legged chieftain, and report said with some thirty thousand men.

Our camp-fires were soon briskly burning, our coffee was boiling, and meat was frying; soon all was ready, and we fell to eating. A small guard was left to take care of the sick and camp equipages that

were left behind, until teams were sent from the town to take them in. Those teams that were going to Saltillo with us soon came out and quickly loaded, and before the dawn of day began to move off. I was one of those who remained; there were in all some sixty persons. We expected the train would come that day; but the day passed away, and still it had not come, and we remained there alone that night. The next morning about ten o'clock it came; we loaded the teams with the provisions, tents, and camp-kettles, and the sick, and left this now deserted spot. There were fourteen of us together. Where the rest of the guard were I can not tell, and they were not to be found. By this time it was nearly night, and we could not go until the day following. Those articles which we did not want we sold, such as candles, soap, coffee, sugar, &c., carrying nothing but bread and meat; these we could easily carry in our haversacks. We started about twelve o'clock the next day; but, before leaving, some of our comrades left us, and were not to be found. As we had in our possession their rations, we searched a long time for them, but as it proved unsuccessful, we had to go without them. We were only five in number, a rather small number to travel safely through an enemy's country sixty miles. We had a horse between us that carried our baggage and provisions. The first day we went twelve miles, slept at a rancho, where, with our own provisions and those we purchased of the ranchеros, we made a hearty supper. We kept good watch for fear of some treachery on the part of our host; but before we went to sleep we made a great display of our rifles and

muskets, examined the loading, &c., simply to inform the rancheros that we were ready to meet them should they make any hostile attempt. Nothing, however, was said or done; whether they were restrained through fear or feelings of respect, I can not say, but, at all events, morning found us safe. When they had arisen we bespoke a breakfast for all, which we obtained by nine o'clock, being thus late on account of some chickens and other fresh meat that we had purchased. We determined beforehand that we would live well while on this march, and purchase as long as money lasted, and then forage on the natives.

At length we made a start: the distance was eighteen miles to the nearest water and house. The road lay between two high ranges of mountains; the valley was about two miles wide; the soil was rich, but little cultivated, and large herds of cattle were seen grazing on it. We pursued our way over hills and through valleys, and had made about one half of our day's journey, when, on a small hill before us, a heavy cloud of dust was seen to rise. In a few moments a body of horsemen came in view: being so far from us, their uniform was undistinguishable, and we calmly made up our mind that, should they prove to be Mexicans, our chance was small; but on their coming nearer, we discovered them to be Colonel May's dragoons. The colonel himself was along, who informed us that there was no fighting to be done yet at Saltillo, and furthermore said that he doubted whether Santa Anna was near that place. He also told us that it was necessary for us to keep a sharp look-out, as the inhabitants were very hostile toward our sol-

diers. That night we arrived at the hacienda, about midway between the two cities. Here was plenty of water, cool and pure, running from the mountains, and as we had nothing to drink during the day, we went to the beautiful stream and slaked our thirst. We then went and inquired for the master of the house. A young man, genteelly dressed, said he was the man. We then inquired if we could sleep in his house that night. He readily answered yes, and led us to a room where we stacked our arms. There were two of them, brothers, with fine features, and of a noble and commanding appearance. We soon found that they had music in the house, and they were kind enough to play some for us on a guitar and violin. I also found an American magazine, from New York. The music that was found in it made one of their favorite pieces.

In the morning, after eating breakfast, we bid adieu to our kind host, and proceeded on our journey. Our road took a turn round a very high mountain, through a long, narrow pass, and ascended to a great height. The pass was just about wide enough for four horses abreast. At length we arrived at the top of the hill, where we saw a number of fortifications that had been commenced after the surrender of Monterey, in violation of the treaty. It was admirably selected, and only required a few works and a few good soldiers to stop a large army. There being only this one way of passing, and that a narrow road, all their batteries could be brought to bear. But information of these works coming to General Taylor, General Worth was sent to Saltillo; and the Mexi-

cans fled on the approach of this commander, leaving the road clear and unobstructed. Being alone, and traveling at leisure, we took a little time to view this spot, which is noted for what occurred here during the revolution against the Spaniards. The Spanish army was retreating through this place, when they were met by a large body of the Mexicans, and forced to fall back. In their rear was another body pursuing them, and to break through either was found to be utterly impossible. Thus hemmed in by the impassable mountains on two sides, and infuriated and vindictive foes on the other, and cut off from all supplies both of provisions and water, their situation soon became intolerable. Some perished by the sword, and the rest by starvation, and, as report says, none escaped to tell the tale.

We saw some four or five places where batteries had been recently thrown up, but evidently not completed. By this time the sun had become excessively hot, and our water giving out, admonished us to push forward, as it was three miles more before any could be had. The road was now descending; and in about an hour we reached a small stream, where we quenched our thirst and filled our canteens. We had now come nearly four leagues. Some of our company, thinking that this was a very good day's march, proposed stopping for the night with some of the rancheros; but this was overruled; and, after resting a while, on we started. About two miles further we came to another hacienda, where serious objections were made to going further that day by some who were anxious to enjoy their liberty a little longer, as

we were then only nine miles from our camp. But, on further consideration, we concluded to go to the next farm-house, which, they told us, was only one league further. To that place we went; but on the road two of our companions determined to go on to the camp that day, and accordingly left us, proceeding at a rapid rate, and we taking our time. On we jogged, seeing little worthy of notice, and meeting occasionally a Mexican traveler. One of these, being a talkative personage, detained us a short time in conversation. On parting, he gave us a good drink of brandy and some cigars; and after a courteous adieu, each party pursued his way. At length we came in sight of the house where we wished to stop, and thought it as long a league as well could be. On arriving there, we asked permission of the proprietor to stop that night. He evidently did not like to give it, neither did he think it safe to refuse; and, after some deliberation, he consented. It was then about five in the afternoon. Our horse was fed, supper ordered, and a room given us where we were to sleep, and in which we placed our baggage, arms, &c. We saw here a number of rancheros, a black and savage-looking set of fellows. They were evidently unfriendly to us; but this mattered not. We asked for supper: they said they had nothing for us to eat. Being only four in number to five or six, we knew not what to do. At last, after some consultation, we told the proprietor that some coffee must be made in half an hour; and, as we had plenty of meat and bread, we did not wish for those articles. But if that thing called coffee was not forthcoming, we would levy a

contribution on some of the poultry and pigs that we saw running round the door. Furthermore, we told them that it was not our intention to rob them, but to pay for all we had of them. These remarks had the desired effect, and in an incredibly short space of time our evening meal was prepared; and it was astonishing to see how changed this man was: he was no longer crabbed and surly, but polite, affable, and attentive. In the evening he came into our room, accompanied by his wife and some other members of his family. They conversed with us some time, and, as the evening was somewhat advanced, then retired, and we, after having locked the doors, spread our blankets and went to sleep. Early in the morning we were awakened by our pliant host, who came with another dish of coffee. We partook of our breakfast, paid the honest Mexican, and took our leave.

The distance from here to the camp was five miles. We went on slowly, stopping to shoot hares, birds, and almost every thing else that we could see; but, notwithstanding our slow pace, the camp at last loomed in view, at which we arrived near twelve o'clock. We found our old companions and messmates as they had left us, well and hearty. As we were so long coming, they had ceased to expect us; as yet, they had had no fight, neither was it certain that they would have one.

The nights were colder than any I had before experienced in this country. We lay about five miles from the town, but the intervening ground being level, it was plainly seen. This was near the last of December, 1846. All was quiet and calm until the

morning of the first of January—a day long to be remembered by our brigade and all the soldiers that were in the city.

We had just mounted guard when a horseman was seen coming to our camp at the height of his speed; soon he came up and delivered his message to the commanding officer, when another was seen coming, and yet another. Affairs certainly appeared to be pressing. Major Sheppard, who commanded the brigade, ordered the guard called in and the regiment under arms, to appear on the parade ground. It was done. He then said that Santa Anna, with thirty thousand men, had come to within sight of General Wool's camp, about twenty miles from Saltillo, and that teams would immediately be sent from town to fetch up the tents and camp equipage, and that in one hour's time we must be ready to march to Saltillo. We saw a tremendous cloud of dust rising, caused by the teams coming on a full run to our camp. The sun by this time had become hot; but still on they came, as though their lives were at stake. Soon they arrived, the beasts foaming and sweating, the drivers whipping and cursing them. In a very short space of time every thing was loaded up, when we took our arms and marched off at very quick time. In about one hour and a half we reached Saltillo; the streets were crowded with people, who seemed frightened out of their wits, and looked like so many ghosts. We passed the quarters of some of the regulars, who were under arms and paraded in the streets; on marching past them, one long, tremendous shout rent the air; it was echoed back and sent forth again.

The greatest excitement prevailed among the citizens as well as the soldiery; drums were beating, colors flying, cannons were paraded, and the greatest exertions were made to prepare for an immediate forward march to repel an expected attack on the division commanded by General Wool, situated some ten miles from the city. We halted in the Plaza and stacked our arms, to await further orders. Soon an express came in with intelligence that it was a false alarm. Toward night another came with a true statement of the case. It seems that one of the picket guards of General Wool in the morning saw a heavy cloud of dust rising from the level open road before them, and as there were many reports that the Mexicans were coming, thirty thousand strong, and day by day expected, it was inferred on these grounds that this supposed body was the advance guard of this army. A carrier was sent below with information and a call for assistance. This is what brought us into town in such haste, and this was the cause of the extraordinary bustle that we saw—but now for the solution of the problem. This cloud of dust was caused by a drove of cattle that the Mexicans were driving to our army to sell, and this was all there was of the enemy being near us at that time.

We took up our quarters in the town for near two weeks. It is built on the side of a hill, and laid out in regular squares; the streets that run parallel with the range of the hill are made on a level with the roofs of the houses on the side below; and if, as is sometimes the case, buildings are on both sides of the streets, the space intervening between these and

the houses below is occupied as gardens, in many of which are some beautiful fountains. There are two plazas; one is used as a market, which is thronged from morning until evening to overflowing. This is the principal mercantile point in the city; in the other there are very few stores, as nearly all the buildings are used for public purposes and private dwellings. They are built in such a manner and furnished in such a style that they would do credit to a more civilized nation. On one side, occupying an entire square, is the Cathedral. It is a very large building; its appearance on the outside is not very imposing, but inside it is trimmed in a most gorgeous and brilliant manner: it has some four or five splendid chandeliers, richly ornamented. The works of gold and silver are numerous and costly, and its paintings are remarkably beautiful. Meetings were held every day; and often did we go there to admire and discover new beauties. On one side of the town is a splendid garden, profusely planted with shade-trees; there are numerous walks, all leading to the center, where are many stone seats, made in a circular form. The fences are made of the century plant, which is of spontaneous growth in this country. The city is plentifully supplied with water, and in its immediate vicinity are several very extensive and rich silver mines.

I at this place became acquainted with a gentleman who was practicing medicine, and was formerly a surgeon in the Texan army. He was taken prisoner at Mier, and was brought to this place after having suffered extreme hardships on the road. Here

he was taken sick, and left in the hospital. When he recovered, he was put to all kinds of drudgery, such as carrying lumber, brick, and water around the city, and received worse treatment than would have been given to a slave. In this state they kept him two years, when a new suit of clothes was given him, and he was set to practicing medicine. He had been engaged in his profession here ten years when I saw him. He stated that he had made several efforts to sell his property there, and go back to Texas. But a sharp eye was kept on him, as they were fully determined never to let him go. But he remarked that he should now close his business, sell his property, and go with the Americans.

Our brigade stayed here two weeks; and as there was nothing to detain us longer, we prepared to go back to Monterey, and went to our old camping ground, to be ready for an early start in the morning. We were awakened in the morning by the beating of the reveillé, and were soon ready for starting. The word forward was given as the rays of the sun were just peering over the distant horizon, which, being thrown on the dew-decked leaves, presented a most beautiful scene. We had gone but a short distance before we met with several companies of recruits, who had just come from the States, and were going to join the regular infantry at Saltillo. Soon afterward we met the first Indiana regiment, who appeared to be much disappointed at the news of there being no fight; but they afterward had it, to their hearts' content, at Buena Vista. We that day went ten miles, and made an early encampment. The next morning, about two

o'clock, we resumed our march, and that day made seven leagues. We were four days on the march, and arrived in Monterey toward the evening of the fourth. We proceeded at once to the wood of San Domingo, on the ground formerly occupied by General Taylor, one mile above our old place, and remained there a few weeks, when we moved into town, to take charge of the citadel, or, as it was more commonly called, *The Black Fort.*

As rumors were in circulation that the Mexicans were coming here also, it was thought advisable to make some improvements in its works of defense, and also to bring into it all the forces in or around Monterey. This was near the first of February, 1847. The operations that had been commenced were carried on vigorously, and the fort was made almost impregnable. At length it became evident that there was some truth in the reports we had heard; citizens were leaving in great numbers; and bodies of armed horsemen were reported to have been prowling about us at a respectful distance. But the dragoons were not with us at this time, having gone away with General Taylor to Victoria; and having no cavalry, we could not scour the surrounding country. Picket guards, however, were sent out every night. About this time we heard of a great misfortune that befell our arms at Agua Nueva. A portion of the Kentucky and Arkansas cavalry were sent from Saltillo on a scout. One night they were surrounded by an immensely superior force, and being unable to withstand them, they surrendered themselves prisoners of war. This, instead of producing feelings of dismay,

only excited those of revenge, as it was reported that they were massacred. There was now no doubt that a battle was near, and the enemy were said to be hovering around, concealing themselves in the mountains for a favorable moment to strike a blow.

At this time Captain C. was going to Camargo with a train of mules and a guard of thirty men, and one commissioned and three non-commissioned officers were detailed to go with this train, to guard the wagons going and returning. This order was issued by Brigadier-general Marshall, then commanding at this point. When we consider the state of affairs at this time, it is a matter of wonder that a larger detail was not made, as it could not reasonably be expected that so small a body could make a successful resistance, and also give protection to an entire train of either wagons or mules. But so it was; and on the 18th of February, about ten in the morning, we took leave of the regiment; we were accompanied by a wagon to carry our provisions, knapsacks, &c.; Lieutenant Barber, of the eighth company, was in command of the escort. Our comrades, whom we left behind us, bid us a cheerful adieu. Just as we were starting, we saw that preparations were making to hoist the regimental colors. We halted until they were up, gave three cheers, and gayly went on our way, little thinking that we were to see them no more. We were in high spirits, and full of fun, rejoicing in the prospect of being for a few days released from the irksomeness of camp life. Our road for a considerable distance was level. The valley between the mountains at Monterey and those

near Seralvo is about thirty miles wide; and as it runs parallel with the mountains, its length I can not state. It is mostly covered with chapparal, and only in one place is timber of any value to be seen, and that is in the grove of San Domingo. There are a few hills and gentle undulations in the land, and occasionally a rancho and a small cultivated field may be seen. These are all the objects that attract the eye or break the monotony of the scene. About ten miles from Monterey is a large rancho, called *San Francisco;* and five miles further is another, called *Agua Frio*, at which place we encamped that night. Only one house in the place looked fit to be inhabited, and that was the Dueño's or master's. This was very large and commodious, and constructed of dobies, an article made of mud in the form of brick, only larger, and dried in the sun. After being laid into wall, it is plastered both inside and outside. For the roof, poles were hewn square, and placed about six inches apart; on these were placed burned brick, and then plastered over. Those of the poorer classes of the people are made by means of poles driven into the ground close together, and the crevices closed with moss, grass, or mud. The roof is usually thatched with the leaf of the bayonet-tree. There is generally only one room, and in this they sleep, cook, eat, and drink. We encamped in the Plaza, on a high bluff bank by the side of the river. At dark we posted our sentinels and stretched ourselves in the open air for a night's sleep, and soon our troubles were all forgotten. During the night I began to dream; several things flitted across my troubled

brain. Just at this juncture the mules were kicking and stamping about, and the idea came into my head that the Mexicans were on us. I immediately yelled at the top of my voice, "Turn out! the enemy is on us!" The cry awakened all my comrades; and by this time I too was awake, and found myself in a standing position. I soon began to realize where I was, and by the jokes and laughter of the others, was soon made sensible of what I had done, and quietly turned in for another nap. We arose early in the morning, and were soon ready for a start.

During the night two travelers had joined us, who were going below. One was Captain Henry, of the Texan Rangers; the other was merely a camp-follower. Captain Henry told us that he was with the Kentucky cavalry, and was taken with them, traveled with them four days, gained all the information possible relative to the force of the enemy, and also the strength of the army that was yet coming. So important was it considered by the officers who were prisoners that this news should reach General Taylor before their arrival, that a plan was concocted for him to make his escape. He was further induced to do so from this fact. During the Texan war, this same Captain Henry was taken by the Mexicans, carried to San Luis Potosi, and kept there two years, after which they let him go, on condition of his taking an oath never to bear arms against the republic again, which he did. He came a second time with the army, was taken, and recognized; and it was their intention to shoot him on their arrival at San Luis. This he knew; and, therefore, he determined to make his

escape. All the officers who were taken were allowed horses, and all those above the rank of captain were allowed to retain their own. The others were furnished with Mexican ponies. On the fourth day, previous to starting, he changed his horse with a Major G., who had a fine blooded animal. At night, when they had arrived at their camping-ground, he was ordered by the officers of the guard to form the prisoners into a line, for the purpose of counting them. He did so; and while he was riding up and down the line, he selected a place to make a break. The guard were very strong, three and four deep all around them. He soon made a desperate rush for the lower end of the line, where three horses were standing abreast. On coming near, the high-spirited horse made a desperate leap, cleared one, knocked the two others down, and swiftly fled from them. So sudden was this movement that they could not possibly prevent its being successful. A shower of balls was sent after him, and a pursuit commenced, but all was of no avail. Before coming up with us he had been attacked by some rancheros. They fired at him, and he was wounded just under the point of the chin. A pursuit was made, but, having the fleetest horse, he soon left them. We were inclined to disbelieve this report, it looked so like an impossibility; but, on our arrival in San Luis afterward, we saw two men who were taken prisoners at that time, and they told us the same story that Captain H. did.

We at this place found a few of the mules that we were to go down with; the rest were coming into the main road at Mariné, all having been hired of the

Mexicans. The escort mounted on some of the mules and started for that place, distant ten miles. The road nearly all the way was very level, and only a few houses were to be seen. The soil is rich, and would, with proper cultivation, support a dense population. We arrived at Mariné early in the afternoon, where we found some more of the mules that had been engaged by Captain C. That night they all came in, accompanied by that gentleman. This is a small but beautiful place, considering that it is a Mexican town. There is a fine Plaza, church, &c.; the houses are all neatly built, and in every respect it has the appearance of a thriving and industrious place. It is situated on a hill, which affords an extensive view of the surrounding country.

The road toward Seralvo is level, and mostly open for some distance, but it afterward becomes quite hilly, winding through ravines; and the scenery assumes a more wild and romantic aspect, and a thick and impenetrable chapparal forms a wall on each side of the road. At some distance in front and on one side rose the cloud-capped mountains. Toward night we reached Papagaya, a rancho, but it had been burned down. Here we encamped; and the next morning we made an early start, determined to reach Seralvo that night. Soon after starting, some of the boys thought that they would ride, and accordingly procured a mule. I also caught a mule, and mounted him. He soon began to rear, kick, and plunge; and, as I had no bridle on him, I could neither govern nor guide him; and there being no help for it, of course, I tumbled off. I was considerably hurt.

This excited the mirth of the Mexicans, who exclaimed "*Mucho bueno*" (very good). This was adding insult to injury, and was more than poor human nature could bear; so I determined to resent it, and, picking up a stone, threw it at him with all my might. This had the desired effect, as it not only silenced him, but also all the rest. It also brought on me the censure of the lieutenant, to which, however, I paid little attention. Our road now became rough and rocky. The passage through the mountains was any thing but an easy and pleasant task; but on we marched, and soon came in sight of Seralvo, which place we reached about sunset. Here we met the train-wagons (105 in number), just coming in from Camargo, under the command of Captain Smith, with an escort of the second Ohio regiment.

We remained here only one night, and in the morning turned to go back with the train to Monterey, the Ohioans returning to Camargo with the mules. This was the 21st of February, 1847. By sunrise we were under way, and that day went ten miles, nothing of any note having occurred. The next morning, a short time after we had started, we met an express from Monterey, who brought orders to Lieutenant B. not to leave Seralvo, as the immediate proximity of a large force of the enemy would render it impossible for him to bring the train, or even come through safely with the guard. The lieutenant, as we were only twenty miles from Mariné, where three companies of the second Ohio regiment were stationed, determined to push forward to that place, and detail what was necessary to go with us to Monterey. We that

night encamped at a rancho called Ramos, in a kind of square, and placed our wagons in a circle, the mules on the inside. Within this we built our camp-fires and cooked our supper. Some of the men took a stroll among the houses, in very few of which was to be seen an inhabitant. This at the time struck us as something remarkable; but the next day's events solved the problem. In addition to the train of wagons, there were with us some merchants going to Monterey and Saltillo. The gentleman from the latter place was an Irishman. He had with him his only daughter, just arrived from Ireland, having been separated from him fifteen years. He had hired some Mexicans with their mules to carry his goods to that city, and thus far had kept company with us. When within three miles of Ramos, the Mexicans refused to proceed further that night. All expostulations were vain; and they proceeded to unload their mules. He then came into our camp, made a statement of the case to the lieutenant, and also his fears for the safety of his daughter, and requested the lieutenant to give him a guard of men to force the muleteers to bring in his goods: this the lieutenant could not do, as he was not connected with the army, nor was he a citizen of the United States. But, he added, if any of the men would volunteer, he would make no objections. Four men offered their assistance, procured horses, and proceeded with him. They soon brought the refractory drivers to their senses, who, on seeing the appearance of the guard, quickly reloaded their mules and came on to our camp.

On the morning following we made an early start.

Our road for a short distance was level, and then descended a large and steep hill. On account of the alarms of the day before, the guard was placed in front; we slowly wended our way along the winding path, frequently stopping to let the wagons close up. We had proceeded in this manner about five miles, by which time the train had descended the hill, and were slowly moving forward on the level plain below, when we were suddenly startled by the cry of "*The lancers are on us!*" On looking to our right, we saw their lances glistening in the sun, and a horrid yell rang in our ears. A heavy charge was made on us by a large body of them, who fired their escopetas at us, which, however, did no execution. We were thrown into confusion, fired a few guns, and retreated into the chapparal, where we formed, and came out with the determination to protect the train, when we saw that the entire line had been attacked at one and the same time. The teams were scattered in every direction. The charge was made with demoniac fury, and volley after volley was fired on the defenseless teamsters, of whom they made a dreadful slaughter. Captain S., seeing that it was useless to attempt saving the train, proposed to Lieutenant B. to go to Mariné, and bring out the troops to assist them in saving it. But the road, we soon found, was guarded strongly by their cavalry; seeing which we struck off into the bushes, and took a circuitous route, hoping to elude their vigilance. We frequently saw bodies of their cavalry prowling around us, but they made no attack, and fled to another position as we approached. After a tedious march of near four hours,

we came in sight of the so-much-wished-for place, but only to encounter fresh troubles; for, as we issued from the dense chapparal into the level, open plain, there stood the enemy formed ready for a charge. They were but a short distance from us, and we could plainly see their officers riding up and down their ranks. They numbered at least one thousand men, and our number only twenty-three, the rest being back among the wagons. Captain S., seeing the utter hopelessness of a resistance against such a force or a successful retreat, proposed to the lieutenant to surrender, as a refusal would be at the cost of all of our lives. The desperate situation in which we were placed induced us to comply. A call was then made for a white handkerchief, to be used as a flag, but none could be found. A white shirt, however, was worn by one of the men, and a part of this was put in requisition, and stuck on a bayonet. Captain S. rode in front a short distance with it, when a Mexican officer rode up and received his arms, having done which they shook hands. We could not but notice his fear and trepidation; so great was his hurry that he was in some measure rude, as he did not wait to have them delivered, but took them, and that not in the most genteel manner possible. By this time General Urrea, commander of the Mexican forces, came up, accompanied with his staff, with whom Lieutenant B. had some conversation relative to the terms of our surrender, treatment, &c. He assured us that we would receive kind usage. At this juncture a large number of their cavalry came up at a full gallop. The lieutenant, supposing that they were going to

charge on us, stepped back, and spoke to General Urrea in these terms: "Keep back your cavalry, G—d d—n you!" This was repeated several times; then turning to us, he said, "Should they make a charge, fire on the officers in front of you, and let the men alone." The cavalry were ordered back, and we were ordered to lay down our arms. As we saw no advantage in further parley, we quietly did so.

There was with us the teamster that went down with us, who had been badly wounded, in the first attack, and had followed us in our meandering course. By this time he had become weak from loss of blood, and unable to proceed any further; so he was carried, by order of the general, to the quarters of the surgeon, and two of our men were ordered to go with him into the town. After resting a few moments, we were marched off to a large rancho about nine miles distant. On our arrival we saw a large number of women, who followed the army. The colonel that commanded the escort asked the ranchero for some pilonci (a kind of sugar) and some tortillas for us to eat: he said he had none. The wily Mexican understood it; for he pulled a dollar from his pocket, gave it him, when forthwith an abundance of provisions were brought out. Here we were in as tight a place as man can well get into, and with no prospect of liberation, and in the power of a most barbarous nation, who would not scruple, on the slightest pretext, to put us all to death. The example of Fanning's massacre, and the fall of Mier, rose vividly to mind, and we all expected to be shot, more particularly as we were volunteers, and had heard that it is

a practice of this government to kill all volunteers, and take none prisoners. At all events, we looked for the most cruel treatment, and we were not disappointed.

Having arrived at this point, it will be proper to take a short glance at some circumstances that took place. The Irish gentleman, to whom we had given assistance the night before, was near the escort when it was attacked, and had a carriage drawn by one horse. In this carriage his daughter rode; and at the first onset of the enemy he was shot dead. Two soldiers came up to it, and saw the young lady; one leveled his gun to shoot her, but the other would not permit it. She got out, and with such haste that she left her bonnet and shoes, and started for the chapparal. Another soldier saw her running, pursued her with his horse, poised his lance, and was in the act of throwing it, when he was shot by one of our men, and thus she was rescued from a horrid death. Her carriage was plundered of all her clothing, money, and jewels. She remarked that she was reduced from wealth to poverty, having lost several hundred pounds of her own money, besides that of her father. She performed the march with us through the woods and thorny bushes with the greatest fortitude. Toward the last one of our men pulled off his own shoes, and gave them to her to wear. We afterward heard that General Urrea gave her twenty dollars, and sent her to Monterey. Several more of our men were coming in all the while, and bringing horrid accounts of the state of affairs. They said that the enemy were riding over the field, killing those who might be wound-

ed, and murdering those who might yet be found. No cries for mercy were of any avail; the groans of the wounded were heard with savage delight. After a long time, our two comrades, who had gone with the wounded teamster, returned, stating that they saw about fifteen hundred soldiers in and around the town. Captain S. was retained with the Mexican general, and did not join us for two or three days.

CHAPTER III.

Treatment of the Prisoners.—Marched to Caterita.—Saddle Mountain.—A Row.—Petty Plundering.—Plan of Escape.—Arrive at Urrea's Head-quarters.—Hard Treatment.—Don Juan.—Kindness of the Mexican Guard.—Occurrences round Marinè.—Proceedings at Head-quarters.—High expectations of the Enemy.—Addition to our Number.—Marched to Mont Morales.—Incidents.—Great change at Morales.—Quarrel with a Soldier.—Depart for San Luis Potosi.—Cruel Treatment.—Arrive at a Town.—Hostility of the Inhabitants.—Wounded Prisoners.—Statements of Mexican Officers.—Suffer from Heat and Dust.—Mountain Passes.—Our Persons searched.—Gloomy Surmises.—Appearance of the Country.—Remarkable Scene.—Receive kind Treatment from the People.—Great Scarcity of Water.—Severe Sufferings.—Generous Conduct of a Woman.—Means of procuring Water.—News of Buena Vista.—Arrival at San Luis Potosi.—Our Reception.

THE people at the rancho treated us kindly, especially the women. Our captors certainly were very much elated with what they termed this important capture. The soldiers appeared to be a sullen, savage-looking set. Frequently they would draw their hands across their throats, to intimate that we were to be thus put to death, saying, "Poco tiempo" (in a little time). This did not alarm us, as we were expecting just such treatment. At last they prepared to march us forward. We were formed into two ranks, and numbered about sixty. A strong guard was placed over us, well mounted and armed. No information was given as to where we were going; but on, on they marched at a rapid pace. At length

we arrived at a place where the road was very narrow, and a high fence on each side of it, composed of the thorny chapparal-bush. Here we thought, without fail, they would murder us; but no—onward we marched, over hill and dale. For a variety, we were forced sometimes to ford rivers that were fifteen or twenty rods wide. These pure and cooling streams would refresh us, and give new life and vigor to our limbs. At length, after a very fatiguing march, we arrived at the city of Caterita about nine at night, rejoicing greatly in not having been shot by the way. During the march that we had made we were in sight of a mountain near Monterey, that was, from its peculiar form, called *the Saddle Mountain*. Often did we gaze at this, and think the farewell that we would like to bid our comrades who were lying securely encamped not far from it. We intended, should circumstances take such a turn that we could make our escape, to make this towering height a landmark to guide us to our friends and the protection of their arms.

The excitement of the people now ran to the highest pitch against the Americans, and we were insulted in almost every shape. Liquor was given to the soldiers, and, drinking to excess, they soon became beastly drunk. One of them, in a fit of generosity, gave one of our men a piece of corn-bread; another soldier, on seeing this, began to quarrel with him about it. Swords were drawn; others joined in the mêlée, and soon it became general. In the affray two of our men were wounded—one severely, the other slightly. We were sitting on the ground, resting.

Some of the most drunken of them ordered us to rise. As several did not understand them, they did not rise. This incensed them: they poised their lances, and threw them with all their force. We all made up our minds to die, expecting that a combined attack would be made to cut us in pieces. At this moment a man came to me, saying that, should they make an attack, it was his intention to unhorse one of the guard, mount his horse, and go back to Monterey. I said that I would go with him. He then showed me the horse that he had singled out, and pointed me to another, a fine, noble animal. Then separating, each of us went close to his chosen horse, anxiously waiting for the crisis. About this time, the officers, coming up, inquired into the cause of the row. To settle it, and prevent its repetition, they flogged the principals severely with their swords. This put an end to it, and we breathed more freely.

We stayed here about one hour, when we were ordered to form in line. We were again counted, and then started, followed by a great number of boys and men, who were continually hooting at us, and throwing clods of dirt and stones, and cheering General Urrea. They followed us a great distance, robbing us of any article of clothing that they might fancy. Some would take a neckcloth, others a jacket, hat, or shoes; and, by the time they had finished, we were completely stripped of all our clothing that was of any value, notwithstanding the weather was exceedingly cold. But we might as well have expected mercy or compassion from fiends as from these demons in human shape. On the march they kept their horses

trotting, and forced us to keep up with them, weary as we were; and should any of us fall back from fatigue or any other cause, he was either pierced with a lance or struck with a sword. During the night, seven or eight of our men were thus mercilessly wounded. Such being the treatment we were to expect for the future, Mr. Parker, captain of a train of wagons, who had been a prisoner among them during the Texan wars, suggested to us to attempt taking the guard, mounting their horses, and going back. The enterprise was desperate, and many, no doubt, would lose their lives. Still, many consented. He then went to the lieutenant for his approbation and assistance. It was by him discountenanced, and no more was said about it. Whether we could have succeeded or not, I can not say; they were well armed and mounted—we, destitute, wearied, and fatigued, would have no advantage at all. But, balancing against these despair, and a determination to find liberty or death, some, doubtless, would have made their escape, and the rest would probably be killed.

By this time the night was well advanced. We would frequently ask our guard how much further we had to go. They would answer, "Five or six leagues," as the case might be. This encouraged us but little, for fears were entertained that some of the men would give up, in which case their death would inevitably follow. The crowd that came out of Caterita had nearly all returned; there being nothing more of which they could plunder us, they became tired of the unprofitable pursuit. But our troubles were not yet at an end, even in this respect, for

many of us had canteens for carrying water; the Mexicans began to take these; and soon every one was taken. About three o'clock in the morning we arrived at the head-quarters of General Urrea, more dead than alive from cold and fatigue. While the commanding officer was inspecting us, we were made to take off our hats as a mark of respect; and those who did not take them off voluntarily had them taken off for them. Officers, men, and women stood gazing at us as though we were the first white men they had ever seen. At this time, an officer who spoke good English, having the appearance of a foreigner, came up to us and asked how we had been treated—whether any of our men had been wounded, and if we had had any thing to eat. We told him all. When informed of the robbery of our clothes, he promised to get them back for us; but we never saw them again. He also told us that if we wanted any thing, and could not call for it, to send for him, and he would come and interpret for us, giving his name as Don Juan. We afterward were informed that he was a deserter from the American army.

At length, to our relief, their curiosity being satisfied, we were marched off to a place used as a corn-house. There was in it some three or four hundred bushels of corn; and, without any thing being given us to eat or drink, we were allowed the privilege of lying on the corn, or cold, bare earth, without coats, blankets, or any thing to cover us, and shelter us from the cold air. A more miserable night (or rather morning, for it was near daylight) could scarcely be passed. At length we fell into a kind of slumber.

As though to torment us as much as possible, when they saw that we were asleep, they awakened us and ordered us to form in for another count, this being about the thirtieth time since our capture. Looking through the door, we could see the gray streaks of morning decking the distant horizon. We gladly hailed the rising of the sun; for as it shone alike on the oppressor and the oppressed, we hoped, in its refulgent rays, to forget, at least for a time, some of our troubles.

We numbered only sixty—twenty-three soldiers and thirty-seven drivers, and we concluded the rest must have been all killed. About eight in the morning Don Juan came to see us; he told us some additional news—said that Urrea had a force of twenty-five hundred men—that they had been fighting in Mariné two days. As that little force was only one hundred and fifty strong, great fears were entertained for their safety. But of one thing we were satisfied, viz., that those brave boys would do their duty. He further stated, that when we were encamped at Ramos, they had us surrounded, but did not dare to attack us, as they feared that we would go into the houses, and from these show fight. This assuredly would have been done; and probably we would not, in that case, have been taken. This clearly accounted for the singular disappearance of the inhabitants that night. About ten, some coffee and tortillas were brought in and divided equally among us. This was to last us for the day; and Don Juan informed us that it was after the most earnest entreaty on his part that even this pitiful morsel was given us. Oc-

casionally a woman would bring some tortillas, hand them through the window to the soldiers of the guard, and they would give us a portion of their rations. In this we were agreeably disappointed, not expecting this act of generosity from them. It was little that they could give; but that little, I believe, saved us from starving.

That day some more prisoners were brought in; they stated that soon after we were taken, and on the same day, two hundred men came from Monterey with two pieces of cannon to succor the garrison in Mariné; that General Urrea, although more than five times their number, would not fight them, but packed up and fled to the mountains, leaving the garrison and also some prisoners, who were so badly wounded that they could not take them. These next day started with the rest of the Americans for Monterey, and having gone as far as Agua Frio, they saw the enemy coming at full charge from the chapparal. They were ready to meet them, and sent a few messengers of death among them from their big guns, following them with volleys from their small arms, killing and wounding a great number, and driving the remainder back to the mountains.

That day we were allowed to go out into the yard around the house. As we went out they counted us, a strong guard watching our movements, and crowds of citizens thronged to see us; but the best order was observed. They made a few attempts to converse with us, but we did not understand them, and they desisted. Frequently did we hear some of the women exclaim to one and another, "pobrecitos" (poor fel-

lows). We felt thankful for their sympathy, but wished them to show it more effectually by giving us something to eat. We stayed out near an hour, when they ordered us to go in, counting us as we passed the door. By this time hunger began to operate on us rather strongly. We begged for something to eat, but it was of no use. They said "poco tiempo;" therefore we waited as patiently as we could for "poco tiempo" to come. About ten o'clock that night two quarters of beef were brought in, and a portion given to every man, without bread or tortillas, and this was to serve until the same time the next night.

A fire was made in the middle of the room with corn cobs. On this we broiled our meat, and ate it as best we could. Before they permitted us to sleep we were counted. The next morning we were turned out for counting, when another fire was made for us to roast more meat. After a while we received another visit from Don Juan, accompanied by some Germans, but they were unable to speak English. Don Juan inquired if there were any who spoke German. On this four men came up to him and held some conversation with their countrymen. They gave them some advice, and, in particular, charged them not to make an attempt to escape, as the Mexican forces were in the possession of all the roads and passes, and an escape, therefore, was impossible. They further said that a speedy exchange would probably take place. They were accompanied by some ladies, who seemed to pity us greatly, and even bought some provisions for us, which were most

thankfully received. They soon left and went their way.

The officers of the guard would try to amuse us by saying how they were going to retake Monterey, Camargo, Matamoras, and, in short, all the places held by the Americans; that Santa Anna had General Taylor entirely in his power, having him completely surrounded by twenty thousand choice troops; that in Vera Cruz were some thirty thousand, in Chihuahua was another large force, and in California about twenty-four thousand, and they were just on the point of defeating the Americans at every place. But these high anticipations came to naught.

We remained here five days, the same routine of treatment being continued. During this time some ten or twelve more prisoners were brought in, making our number about seventy-two. On the sixth day we were paraded in the street and counted preparatory to a march. Previous to starting, however, they gave us two shillings each. The officer that was to command the escort had an air of noble frankness about him that won our confidence and esteem. We surely thought that with him we would at least find protection, nor were we disappointed. He proved himself to be a gentleman and a man of honor. The troops were all leaving here and going to Mariné, having the prospect of another battle with the Americans. At length, all being ready, we started; Don Juan, we found, was to go with us. At this all greatly rejoiced, thinking that he might be able to render us some assistance, which he did, too, though over the left shoulder.

The place we were going to is called *Mont Moralés*, distant eighteen leagues. We moved off just as the sun had risen. This place, which a few moments before was a scene of bustle and activity, was now entirely deserted, and silent as the grave; we were among the last who left, and were forcibly struck with the silence that reigned around us. The air being cool, we moved at a rapid pace; many were quite stiff and sore from the effects of the severity of our first march. The road was very rough and rocky, from its proximity to the mountains; the country was uncultivated, and only in one place were to be seen houses or inhabitants.

At this time we looked back, and for the last time saw the Saddle Mountains; and many were the surmises and conjectures relative to what our friends were doing. The guard, whose attention also had been directed there, well knowing about what we were speaking, laughed in derision, saying, *Mucho bueno los Mexicanos*, and *Carajo los Americanos*. Then from another quarter would we hear some of them boasting how valiant they were, and what cowards were their enemies. About eleven o'clock we came to a large hacienda, where we rested and purchased some provisions. While here, Don Juan came to us, saying that he wished to make a proposition to the men, which was, that as he was going with us through the country, and understood the language, the prices of provision, &c., it would be better for us to give him our money, as he could get more with the same amount than we could. To this we readily acceded, and each one gave him his two shillings.

Soon after we were ordered to march, and they counted us as we fell into line. The sun by this time was very hot, which, with the dustiness of the road, added greatly to our inconvenience. But not a murmur was heard. We determined to bear all that they could inflict unflinchingly. And when it was nearly sunset, our caterer went forward at a swift pace. From this we thought that our day's march was nearly through, and we quickened our pace; but we did not reach the town until eight at night. They conducted us to the carcel, where we found a large concourse of citizens, crowding around to see us. A few months before, a body of Americans came into this town and fortified it. The works were still standing; and in front of us was the staff on which waved our victorious flag. Then the Mexicans were all submission and servility; now they were overbearing and insulting.

After standing here nearly half an hour, we went into the jail-yard, where we found provisions of all kinds, and utensils to cook them in. We soon prepared our supper, and for the first time since our capture had enough to eat. Being very tired, we soon went to sleep; previously, however, I had purchased of a soldier a blanket, for which I gave him a dollar, the last and only money that I had. The room assigned us was far too small for so large a company. We some way or other, however, made room to lie down; but the air soon became insufferably hot and close, as there was no circulation. So a rush was made to the door; but, as it was locked, one made room for another, in order to get a little fresh air

through the cross-bars. At length sleep overcame us, and our troubles were forgotten.

Early the following morning our door was unlocked, and we were permitted to go into the yard. It was not large, yet it was sufficiently so to afford us good exercise. It also contained a well, and a large vat or tub, made for washing. At an early hour more provisions were brought for us, and our breakfast was soon prepared. At the moment the door was first opened, the soldier of whom I had on the previous evening bought the blanket came in, walked up to me, and coolly took it. I resisted, and was in the act of taking it from him, when he drew his sword, I suppose to frighten me. I at the same time drew a large pocket-knife that I had, having a blade about six inches long. Some of my comrades interfered, and forced me to give up the blanket. Had they not done so, I know not how the affair would have ended. But I gave it up; and when Don Juan came in, I told him of it. He called the soldier out, and reported him to the captain, who made him return the blanket, and gave him a severe flogging.

We remained at this place two days; and on the morning of the third we were awakened long before day, and ordered to turn out, cook our breakfast, and prepare for a march. About daybreak we were ready, and on we started, passing the massive gateways that held us confined like so many cattle.

Our march to-day was very rough, and over a distance of eighteen leagues; water was to be had but twice on the route. Our guard hastened us on at a rapid pace, as though anxious to hurry us from the

place where we had, for the first time since our capture, received any thing like good treatment. Our route was along the foot of the mountains, and consequently rough, barren, and uninhabited.

Scenes of cruelty (some of which I can not put on these pages) occurred on this day, one or two of which I will relate. One of our company was sick, and unable to keep up. He fell behind, and was found by an officer, who was not attached to our guard, who whipped him with his sword until he could scarcely stand, and was utterly disabled from moving. His hands were then tied together, and by them he was hung on the pommel of the saddle of this gallant official, and dragged along some three miles. From this intolerable and excruciating position he was at length relieved by the commanding officer, placed on a mule, and carried to the town whither we were going. As the day advanced it became excessively hot, and, having no water, our thirst was very great. Toward noon our eyes were gladdened with a stream; but imagine our disappointment when, instead of being allowed to drink, orders were given to move on. All our entreaties were of no avail; *they* had enough, and their hearts were deaf to our appeals. With sad forebodings we pressed onward. Not a word of complaint escaped our lips; for it was our firm resolve to bear all that they could inflict on us, and show them that, as American soldiers, we could suffer adverse fortune as well as achieve glory with our arms. We were proud of our situation, as no disgrace was entailed on us in our defeat, our force being thirty, and theirs one thousand.

About two o'clock we came to a hacienda or large farm-house, where we rested a while, and procured some water and a little provision. Orders were soon given to move on, and again we were picking our way through the chapparal. This was the first house we had seen since we left Mont Morales, and it was the last we should see until our arrival at Linares, a distance of near ten leagues. But *on*, *on* we traveled, occasionally cheered by the sight of a drove of wild horses, of which there were plenty.

At length we came to another stream, where we were allowed to rest a while—a favor as acceptable as a meal of victuals could have been at other times. Soon we started onward, and, ascending a high hill, we had a view of the place where we were destined to pass the night. We had still a great distance to travel before we could hope for rest, yet the sight infused fresh vigor into our limbs; the burning sun and the clouds of dust that rolled up before us no longer served to depress our spirits, and we cheerfully obeyed the orders to quicken our march. At last the sun, whose heat had scorched our bodies for two thirds of the day, went down, and a deep gloom succeeded, but the atmosphere was cool and invigorating. By the faint glimmerings of lights, the outline of a town could now be discerned, and at length we reached the suburbs. There we met a large concourse of citizens, who came out to gaze on men belonging to the armies which had gained such signal victories over them. The populace became excited, and an attempt was made to break the guard and massacre us; but, by the vigilance of the officers and the exertions of

our guard, we were saved from destruction. In this attempt several Mexicans were wounded severely; and from the curses and execrations with which we were greeted as we passed along, it was evident that they were highly exasperated against us; but we arrived safely at the quarters assigned us. Here, also, we found provisions awaiting us, but we were so tired and exhausted that we could hardly move. Some lay down on the ground and went to sleep; others, who were more hardy, prepared some coffee, meat, and tortillas. After eating we immediately lay down, and soon forgot that we were prisoners.

Several of our men had been wounded seriously when we were captured, and their wounds were dressed but once since they were taken. I was now called to go and dress them, as it was known that I had spent some time in the study of medicine and surgery. On the march they had been allowed to ride, and to mess with our officers; so they got on quite comfortably. Some materials were procured, which I proceeded to use to the best of my ability. Their wounds, I found, were in a very bad condition, owing to neglect and the warm weather; but, as they were now dressed daily, they healed rapidly, and in the course of four weeks they were completely healed.

Our quarters at this place were superior to any we before had. The town is large and regularly built; the houses are generally but one story high, and, like all other Mexican towns, they have flat roofs, with battlements. Of our treatment at this place we were not disposed to complain; we had plenty to eat and drink; and though we lay on the cold, hard

ground, yet, as prisoners of war, what better could we expect at the hands of this barbarous people? While here, we were joined by eight more prisoners, making our present number eighty; these informed us of the victories of our arms at Mariné and Cold Water. Bad as was our condition, we heartily rejoiced over these successes; for, from the time of our capture, the Mexican officers were continually telling us that they were going to retake all the towns occupied by the Americans; that Santa Anna was going to Saltillo with 22,000 men; that Taylor and all his army would soon be prisoners; that 40,000 choice troops were going to Vera Cruiz; 20,000 were going to California, &c. They told us a thousand stories of this kind—that a storm was gathering, and about to burst on our victorious arms, the substance of which was, that they would come on us as an avalanche, armed with irresistible power, and with one mighty stroke hurl us from our lofty height, crush us, and consign us to eternal oblivion. All this gasconade served only to amuse us, and beguile the many weary hours which passed; for we well knew that the reverse was the case, and all their boasting gave us no uneasiness.

We stayed here two days, and then started for San Luis Potosi, a distance of thirty days' march. Our first day's march was short (only fifteen leagues), but unusually rough, dreary, and fatiguing. The country was uninhabited and uncultivated; the mountains in front, and a dense chapparal on our sides, was all the eye could see. The sun was intensely hot; the dust rolled up in clouds above us; no wa-

ter was to be had, and our sufferings were extreme. Our guard had plenty of water, but from them none could be had. On, on they pressed us, like so many beasts, perfectly regardless of our sufferings.

At night we stopped at a large hacienda, at the foot of the mountains. There were few buildings of any sort, and but one which deserved the name of house. In this one we were quartered. It was situated in a gap of the mountains, through which we were to pass on the morrow. In the rear and in front were mountains of immense height, the former rising gradually, the latter almost perpendicularly to a height not greater than that of the others; and the scene was both grand and sublime. After partaking of a scanty supper of half-roasted meat, we were paraded in front of the place destined for our lodging. Then our interpreter came and said that we must all give up our knives, adding that they would be given to us on our arrival at San Luis. He added, that we must also submit to be searched. All our pockets were accordingly rummaged, and knives, money, and every thing else was taken. Some had valuable papers, which were also taken. This, I have good reason to suppose, was done by authority of the officers. What reason they had for so doing, I know not; but we certainly expected that we must now quietly submit to have our throats cut, having been repeatedly told, since our capture, that such was to be our fate, notwithstanding their many assurances that we should be protected. We remembered the fate of the prisoners of the Alamo, and of Fanning and his brave comrades on the bloody fields of Texas. But it was our

firm resolve that, if we had to die, we should do so with arms in our hands; we should have turned on our guard, seized some of their arms, and dealt death at every blow around us to the utmost of our power.

After this act of official robbery, we were ordered to our rooms, counted as we passed in, and then locked up. Then did the comforts we once enjoyed around our fathers' firesides present themselves before us in bold relief—in striking contrast to our present situation: a captivity to which we saw no end, and a combination of miseries to which we saw no bounds, save death.

The next morning we were awakened early, and immediately ordered to fall into line and move onward, which we accordingly did. We were now to go through one of the passes, of which there are so many in these mountains. It was, most of the way, narrow, and extremely rough and rocky; now climbing steep precipices, then descending into deep defiles, and then proceeding along sharp ledges of rock. The thorny bushes which hemmed us in on each side proved destructive to our clothes; and the craggy rocks were fast destroying the last remnants of our shoes, and none of us could boast of a sufficiency of covering to protect us from the heat of the day and the chilling blast of night.

Our path was cheered by an occasional hut, occupied by shepherds; and we saw large flocks of sheep and goats grazing on the mountains.

A sharp turn in the road brought us in view of one of the most magnificent scenes I ever saw. We came into a sort of narrow lane, about twenty feet

wide, and about as many rods long, and perfectly level on the bottom. On each side, a perpendicular rock, smooth as mason-work, rose to an immense height. One of our number, who was a surveyor, said that, in his opinion, it could not be less than one thousand feet in height. At the further end of this wall, a perfect arch was formed over the road. Here we halted a moment, and gazed with wonder and admiration on this specimen of Omnipotent power. One of our number at length remarked that the Almighty must have done his best here in creating this stupendous scene.

Orders now were given to march, and we passed on through this arch. We began again to climb, and then descend mountains. Not unfrequently we came to a chasm, deep and dark, over which we were forced to leap, there being no other way by which to pass it; and, fortunately, we all passed them safely. About sunset we arrived at a small town, having traveled but eight leagues that day; but, as might be expected, we were excessively wearied.

At this town good quarters were provided for us, and very good fare; the people we found to be kind and generous, as they voluntarily gave us many things of which we stood in great need, and which we had no means to get. This was the first time that we had received any favor from the inhabitants; and we were informed by our interpreter that we would find them more favorably disposed toward us as we advanced into the country. We were also told that henceforth there would be a great scarcity of water, and that our marches would consequently be much

longer, averaging from fifteen to twenty leagues per day. How the people here supported themselves is to me a mystery, as the land is not capable of irrigation, being altogether too broken and hilly; and I saw no cultivated land but a few small patches, that appeared to be garden spots. They might, however, have been engaged in mining among the mountains through which we had passed. These are said to be abundantly supplied with the precious metals. Be this as it may, the town is a neat, thrifty-looking place.

The next day we marched twenty leagues, nothing having occurred worthy of note, except that we lost our way by the carelessness of our guide, which caused us some extra traveling. Between a burning sun, clouds of dust, raging thirst, and hungry stomachs, this was aggravating enough; but we were hurried along, without even once stopping until after dark, when, more dead than alive, we dragged our weary limbs, as best we could, into the quarters assigned us.

We passed a weary and almost sleepless night; and early the next morning we were aroused, and ordered to get breakfast, and prepare for a long march. This was more tedious than the preceding day's, on account of the extreme dustiness and heat, but still no one gave out until toward night, when three fell down, utterly parched for want of water, and completely disabled from proceeding. I was one of the number. Well do I remember the agony of that moment, when death stared us in the face, and we expected to bid a long farewell to friends, home, and

comrades. We were suddenly aroused by the voice of one of the officers, ordering us onward; but our attempts to rise were vain, until he drew his sword and severely flogged us. We eventually succeeded in reaching camp, but in a condition not to be envied. Just before reaching our quarters, in passing along a street, I saw a woman giving water to some of our men. I started to go and get some also; but the guard again drew his sword, and forced me on. The woman, seeing this, filled her gourd, and hastily brought it to me. I drank it off, and would have drank more, could it have been got. For this generous act I could only return my thanks. But, had I been possessed of the wealth of the Indies, I would have relinquished it to her. As our general treatment was bad, I take great pleasure in recording such marked instances, where we were treated as human beings in distress.

Wherever we found a village we usually saw a large tank, which would fill during the rainy season, and afford them a sufficient supply of water for the dry season. As for springs and streams, none were to be seen, although we were in the midst of hills and mountains.

In addition to want of water, our sufferings were increased from the fact that what little clothing we had left us was now wearing out. Many had no shoes, others had no hats, few had coats, and *none* had clothing sufficient to make them comfortable, and we were many times forced to sleep out of doors, exposed to the chilling blasts of the mountain winds.

About this time we heard of the great battle of

Buena Vista; our interpreter merely told us that Santa Anna was forced to retreat. This we guessed; for none would believe that the one-legged chieftain, with his 22,000 choice troops, could cope with the hero of Palo Alto and Monterey, with his five thousand volunteers. We were encouraged by this news to hope for a speedy exchange.

At last San Luis Potosi, the long-wished-for place, hove in sight; it was a long way off, but there we were to rest. In the joy of the moment, our fatigues were forgotten, and we hurried on, anxious to behold the second city of Mexico both in population and wealth. We arrived at the city, but could see nothing, as we were hurried at a rapid pace to the quartel, escorted by a band of music, and saluted with the shouts of the citizens, and the gibes and jeers of the soldiers. After marching us through several streets like a drove of cattle till their curiosity was satisfied, they at last took us to our quarters.

CHAPTER IV.

Mexican Army return from Buena Vista.—Hard Treatment of the Prisoners.—March southward.—Rich Mexican.—Appearance of the Country.—Hospitality of the People.—Escorted toward Mexico by a Division of the Army.—Condition of the Mexican Forces.—Mineral Wealth.—Arrive at Queretaro.—Our Condition there.—Relieved by the Charity of some Citizens.—Description of the Town.—Aqueducts, Squares, Market, and Convent.—Religious Festival.—Our Liberty abridged.—The Cause.—Attempt to Escape.—It Fails.—The Result.—Sickness.—Depart for Mexico.—I am left at San Juan del Rio.—Delirium and Insensibility.—Recovery.—Sad Condition.—Kindness of Visitors.—Hospitality of the Doctor.—He becomes my Instructor in Spanish, and learns English of me.—He makes a surprising Discovery.—Introduced to a Priest and several Citizens of the higher Classes.—Different Conduct of the lower Classes.—Difficulties with them.—Generosity of the Priest.—Short Rations.—Learn a Trade and commence Work.—Discouraging Result.—Debarred from proceeding with other Prisoners.—Description of San Juan del Rio.—Domestic Arrangements of the People.—Generous Offer.—A Ball.—Religious Discussion.—Mexican Generals.—Santa Anna.—Account of Captain Gonsalez.—The San Patricio Company.—Various Views regarding the War.—Dismay and Rejoicing.—Results of the Capture of Mexico.

The Mexican army had just returned from Buena Vista, and from some deserters from the American army, who had fought with the Mexicans, we learned that Santa Anna had been totally routed, and in killed, wounded, and deserters, had suffered a loss of near one half of his army; also that he was now raising new forces, and endeavoring to collect a still larger army, determined to overwhelm General Scott. A part of the army was quartered in the same quartel with us, though they were separated from us.

We remained in the quartel five days, during which time no food was given us. What could have been the object of the governor in thus treating us, I can not say. During this time the cry was not for water, of which we had plenty, but for bread. Our hunger became so great that we even wondered why we had not eaten more when we had it to eat. We pleaded for some food, but in vain. They seemed to delight in our sufferings.

On the morning of the sixth day we were paraded in the yard; two shillings was given to each of us, and without time being allowed us to buy any victuals, we were marched off, weak and debilitated as we were. They marched us thirty miles before we halted; and then, for the first time within six days, we procured something to eat. Most of us spent our two shillings, and were as far from being satisfied as when we began to eat; and as we were determined not to starve when plenty was within our reach, we adroitly took by stealth enough to satisfy our wants. Some fuss was made about it, but the perpetrators could not be detected, and we escaped a punishment which might have been severe.

This night we stayed in a town containing some two thousand inhabitants; and, as we were informed by our interpreter, it was owned entirely by one man. He also told us that we would travel four days on this same man's land, and every night encamp in towns fully as large as this, all owned by this man. He likewise said that, at the commencement of the war, the same man gave four thousand horses to government, and clothed, equipped, and supported one

regiment of cavalry on service during the war. This statement I at the time doubted, but afterward found it to be correct.

The country through which we were now passing was mostly level, and generally highly cultivated; corn, beans, and red pepper were the staple productions. The land was supplied with water by irrigation. The inhabitants appeared to be better educated than in any part which we had yet seen; and they certainly were more hospitable, for many a time did we experience their kindness.

We traveled for some time, under the escort of one of the divisions of the Mexican army, toward the city of Mexico. While with them we had a good opportunity of seeing the discipline and treatment of Mexican soldiers. From the elements of which the army was composed, I should think it was next to an impossibility to maintain any thing like strict order, or make it a force which a man might be proud to command. The subordinate officers were, generally speaking, ignorant and illiterate. In proof of this, I will relate the following occurrence. After we went into quarters at night, a captain of the guard came into our room and conversed with us for some time, asking us questions about our country, &c. At last he asked us if General Washington was coming to Vera Cruz with General Scott. It took us some time to be convinced that he was in earnest, and it really was a difficult matter to convince him that the great Washington had been dead nearly fifty years. Many of these officers were taken from the fields, and placed in command of men as illiterate and boorish as them-

selves. Others were taken from the ranks, and, without education or instruction in the first principles of military matters, they were placed in responsible and prominent positions. The men were, as a body, exceedingly degraded, and controlled only by the fear of the sword. While on a march, should any through fatigue fall behind, they were sure to be severely flogged with the sword. Many were so worn out that they fell dead on the road; and this was a common occurrence. We saw one killed on the spot by an officer while attempting to desert. They are poorly fed and clothed, and worse paid; of their pay they never receive the full amount. Under such circumstances, their army was little more than a mere rabble; but where they have good officers, and are properly treated, they make good soldiers.

This section of the country, besides being extremely fertile, is said to abound in mineral wealth; but as yet it yields them little, and that little is derived principally from the foreigners who now occupy the richest portion of the mining region. The natives are either too ignorant or too indolent to derive any more benefit from this internal wealth than the simple two shillings per day which they receive as wages. They would sit and play cards all day on silver stone, and not know it.

After a hard march of six days we arrived at Queretaro. Here we found some five or six Americans, prisoners of war, who had been here some months. They were taken by General Canales, of whom I have before spoken, and who, by-the-way, had been appointed major general in the Mexican army. Be-

ing so few, they had received much better treatment than we.

At this place we were allowed the freedom of the city; and, after a few days, we had liberty to go where and when we wished. But at first no provisions nor money was given us; and I, for one, was so hard pressed with hunger, that I would pick up orange-skins and old tortillas out of the gutters in the streets, and eat them with a relish. We now, for the first time since our capture, had sufficient water and time to wash our clothes, during a period (as near as I can remember) of about two months. So thick was the dirt on our clothes that their original colors could not be discerned, and we were literally covered with vermin; indeed, our appearance was very revolting. For want of a barber, our hair and beards had grown to a great length; and in this miserable plight, without jackets, and nearly all of us without hats or shoes, we paraded round the capital of the state of Queretaro. At length our miserable appearance excited the sympathies of a few of the citizens. Some were supplied with blankets; to others, clothes, shoes, and other necessary articles were presented. One day, as I was passing along one of the main streets, I was called into a house, and furnished with a pair of pantaloons, shoes, and a shirt, and about twenty hats to supply myself and my comrades, so far as they would go. As I had been bareheaded long enough, a hat was very acceptable, as, indeed, was every thing else.

After some four or five days, they again gave us our two shillings, on which we lived very comfortably.

The city is situated in a large valley, and is regularly laid out in squares. It contains two public squares, in one of which is a large fountain. The water that supplies it is brought three miles in an aqueduct, which supplies the whole city. This great work was begun and executed by an American. The buildings on the main streets are large and well finished, and the public edifices are the most splendid of any I saw in Mexico, except those of Guadalajara. The interior of their churches is richly ornamented with gold and silver; and the walls are ornamented with paintings executed by some of the great masters, and seeming to breathe the breath of life. It is their custom to go to church and say mass every morning. During service they all kneel both from reverence and necessity, as there are no seats in any of their churches. It is a universal custom here, as in every part of Mexico, when meeting a priest, to take off their hats. To this custom we did not conform; on the contrary, if we met a priest on the sidewalk, we had not even manners enough to turn out for him to pass; and, as a natural consequence, he was forced to give us the walk.

The squares are used as a market-place; and every evening, and all day on Sundays, they are filled with people, some selling, and others buying, every thing that grows in that country. A great variety of manufactured articles also are there exposed for sale; and in every part hucksters may be seen vending all kinds of victuals, ready cooked, by the claco's-worth (one cent and a half). On one side of the city is a large park, containing some ten acres, most beauti-

fully laid out; in the center is a large and splendid fountain, and around this, at a distance of about twenty feet, are several seats, capable of accommodating two hundred persons. From this central point graveled walks extend to every part. The whole is inclosed with a stone wall, the entrances being guarded by an iron gateway. There is also a cotton factory near the city, conducted by some Englishmen, which appeared to be doing a heavy business.

Just in the very heart of the city is a convent, the largest I ever saw, occupying an entire square. From the outside it appeared to be a massy wall; windows and doors there were none, and but two entrances, secured by large and massive gates. Of its arrangement in the interior I know nothing, as we were not permitted to enter, although hosts of holy fathers could be seen passing in and out at all times of the day, and possibly of the night.

About this time occurred one of their religious festivals, which lasted several days. Day and night processions were marching through the streets, with martial music, some of which could not have been less than three miles long. At the head marched a priest, carrying a golden cross and Christ. When this passed, the spectators all took off their hats, and many knelt down, repeating their Ave Marias, and I know not what else. In the night they carried torch-lights, and also images of a ghastly and horrid appearance, which personated the Jews. During the marching of the procession, all the bells of the city were kept ringing; so that, between the noise of the bells, and the loud praying and singing of this great

mass of zealots, a noise was made that would rival old Bedlam.

The last night of the performance was to end in burning the Jews in effigy. This we did not see, as the officers thought that the religious excitement of the populace might get so high as to endanger our safety; and so we were confined in the jail. The liberty which we had so long enjoyed was now drawing to a close; the change originated thus: One day one of our number was reading a Testament, which we had succeeded in bringing along. The captain of the guard discovered this book, flew into a terrible passion, took it away, threw it on the ground, stamped on it with his feet, and shook his sword at us, cursing and swearing roundly at us; but it was all Greek to us, not a word could we understand. From this day forth our liberty was taken away. When this man was on guard, he treated us with great severity, not allowing us even to exercise in the yard.

Such useless severity induced us to make an attempt to escape and go to Vera Cruz, having heard that General Scott had taken that place. There was among the officers taken with us one who had formerly been a prisoner for two years during the war between Texas and Mexico. He understood their language thoroughly. Under his guidance we determined to make the attempt. All the officers had still the liberty of the city, and through them we obtained all the requisite information as to where we could obtain a sufficiency of horses, arms, &c. We ascertained that the main body of troops had left for the city of Mexico; consequently we had little to fear

from them. Attached to the jail was an arsenal, and just across the yard was an armorer's shop. In these two places we were in hopes of getting arms sufficient for our whole number. The day of trial was at length fixed; it was to be when the old tyrant who had deprived us of our liberty was on guard, for we wished to settle up with him before we bid good-by to our old friends of Queretaro.

At last it came. As soon as the old guard went away and the new one was stacking their arms, we rushed into the arsenal, secured the arms, and found that not more than half could be supplied. We then went into the shop, but there was not enough. By this time the guard was alarmed, and an express was sent off for re-enforcements. In about two minutes it came, and halted in front of the quartel. Two companies were marched into the yard in front of where we were standing. The commanding officer ordered us to lay down our arms: we hesitated. He ordered his men to fire. There we stood, in front of near two hundred men, with their loaded guns pointing directly at us. Again he ordered us to lay down our arms, when, thinking it was fool-hardiness to per severe, we did so.

They now put us into separate cells, and no longer allowod us the liberty of the yard. We afterward discovered that some two thousand soldiers had come into the city, of which we had heard nothing; and thus our attempt failed. Our treatment now was extremely severe. So many were crowded into these small cells that room could not be had to lie down to sleep, and we were forced to sit, leaning against

the walls. There were no windows; consequently, all the light and air we had came in through the cross-bars in the door: through these a miserable pittance of food was given us once a day. Again we were reduced to nearly a starving condition, and annoyed almost to death by the vermin that constantly assailed us, and from which there was no protection.

Our sufferings proved too much for many of us, for almost daily some were carried to the hospital, being too sick to take care of themselves. I was also taken sick; but, as I could contrive to stand up, I would not go to the hospital. I was the more anxious to remain with the rest, as we were informed that in a few days we should move on to Mexico, and I desired to go with them. I was daily growing worse, but I was determined not to yield.

In a day or two we started, and I went with them, staggering at every step from weakness, and my comrades supporting me on each side. In this way I went a couple of miles, when the commanding officer, seeing my condition, placed me on a mule. The first day I got along very well; but the second, I was so sick and weak that they were forced to hold me on. I continued to grow worse and worse, and at length I became delirious. Of the latter part of that day's march I know nothing.

We that day stopped at San Juan del Rio, where I was left in the hospital. As I parted from my comrades, they came to me, shook hands, and bade me good-by. This was the last of my recollection; nor did I come to myself sufficiently to know where I was

until four weeks afterward. This period I must pass over. The first that I recollect, a man and woman were at my bedside, urging me to take a dish of attale. This I disliked, and therefore I refused. They urged and urged, but still I refused; and, as they continued to urge me, I took the dish from their hands and dashed it on the floor, and went without my supper.

From this time I perceived that I slowly recovered. I was reduced to a mere skeleton; my fingers seemed to be six inches long; and clothes that before my sickness fitted me tight, now would go nearly twice around me. I was visited daily by the doctor, and several priests, and ladies and gentlemen also, who appeared to be of the higher circles of society. In the course of three weeks I was able to walk about; but, being unable to converse with those around me, or they with me, I was dumb, and nothing could arouse my naturally lively feelings. I even wished that, from my sick-bed, I had been carried to my grave, so hopeless appeared my prospects.

Beside the hospital was a church, where mass was said every morning, commencing before daylight. After church many would come to see me. Some gave me money; and the kindness I received here in part reconciled me to my fate. All seemed anxious to lessen the weight of my afflictions. As soon as I was able to walk out, the doctor gave me an invitation to go to his house. The hospital steward was to accompany me, and one of his own servants was to come with me back to the hospital. Accordingly, in the afternoon I went up to his house. He received

me very cordially, and before sitting down, inquired which I would have, coffee or chocolate. I did not wish for either at the time; but thinking that this was a customary mode of treating visitors, I replied chocolate, being determined not to betray any ignorance of their manners and customs.

After this he got some books, and came and sat down by me. He showed me an English and Spanish grammar and dictionary. He was trying to learn our language; and his wishes were, that I should teach him, and, in return, he would teach me Spanish. This offer I gladly accepted; and our intercourse was carried on by means of writing and translation.

In the course of three months the doctor could speak our language so as to be easily understood, and his instruction was certainly a great benefit to me. I went daily to his house; and in the morning, when he came to see the sick in the hospital, he would remain to converse with me two or three hours. I found him to be a man of education, and, for a Catholic, possessed of liberal principles. One day he asked me if I understood arithmetic, geography, and grammar. I told him I did. At this he seemed surprised; for, among the majority of Mexicans, the Americans are considered as ignorant and unlettered; in fact, they are looked upon as a nation of barbarians. It was, therefore, a matter of some surprise to him to hear of rail-roads on which we might travel ten and fifteen leagues an hour, and of a telegraph, by which one might transmit messages any distance and receive a reply in a few moments. One day,

when at his house, on looking over some books, I found one in the Greek language. I opened it, and began reading. On seeing this he was utterly amazed. That a foreigner, and an American too, should understand Greek, was almost impossible. He, however, believed the evidence of his senses, and asked if I understood Latin also. I replied that I did.

From that time forth the doctor was my firm and fast friend. He took me to see a priest, by the name of Julian Miranda, a wealthy and influential man. By the two I was taken to visit several of their most distinguished families, by whom I was treated with marked respect. From this time forward I was a popular man, and, being under the protection of two such prominent persons, none durst publicly molest me. During the eight months that I remained here, I was treated by the well-bred with marked kindness, but by the lower classes I was occasionally misused. My life was threatened, and once even attempted. It occurred as follows. While I was yet confined to the hospital, and so weak that I could scarcely walk, a man came in and passed me two or three times, and then addressed me. Not understanding him, I made no reply. He became greatly excited, drew his knife, seized me by the hair, and appeared as though he was going to plunge it into my heart. But, before he could accomplish his murderous intention, the steward came in, forcibly thrust him from the hospital, and closed all the doors. By his timely appearance I was saved from destruction.

To illustrate the feeling of the lower classes toward me, I will relate some other circumstances. After I

was able to go out, a mob several times collected around me, abused me with all sorts of vile language, and even threw clods of dirt and stones at me. All this I passed over, as I was not in a condition to resent it. But it was remembered, and afterward paid with interest; for, when I became sufficiently strong, I prepared myself with a good and heavy oaken staff. With this I boldly went where I was most likely to meet with these cowardly ruffians, and, should any one presume to interfere with me, I was sure to belabor him with my cane until I was perfectly satisfied. By this means I not unfrequently got into scrapes that I had not bargained for; but by good luck and a little hard fighting, I got safely out, though occasionally I bore the marks of the knife or bruises from a club.

Once, when attending a funeral, on my return in company with a few young friends, a crowd followed in the rear. When in one of the back streets and far from any dwelling house, a stone was thrown at me, which hit me in the back. I turned around and inquired who had thrown it. No answer was returned. My friends said they would stand by me. I then picked up a large stone weighing some twenty pounds, went into the midst of the crowd, and demanded who had thrown the stone at me. At this appearance of determination they became frightened, and forthwith pointed to the man who had done it. I stepped up to him, raised the stone over his head, and brought it down with all the force I could muster. The blow completely stunned him; he fell like a log. I then began to beat the rest over their heads

with my cane; and as no resistance was made, being deprived of their ringleader, they soon ran like a flock of sheep.

This adventure established my character among them as a desperate man, and, in consequence, they were afterward more cautious how they molested me. So great was their dread of me, that, when meeting them, they would turn off and give me the sidewalk. I now feared an attack in the night, and consequently remained in doors.

One day Father Miranda came to the hospital, and asked me if the clothes I had on were all I had. On being answered affirmatively, he said that if I would go to his house with him, he would give me some new ones. As mine were nearly gone, of course I went, and he gave me a pair of new shoes, pantaloons, shirts, a hat, and coat. In short, he dressed me up as well as he was himself, and gave me some money. After this he continued to give me some occasionally as long as I stayed there.

My daily rations were not cooked in the hospital, but were brought to me—I know not whence—three times a day, and dealt out with what I considered a very sparing hand. Some chocolate, about a gill, or some sour orange-leaf tea, and a small piece of bread, was my allowance for breakfast; for dinner, about half a pint of beef soup, a small piece of meat, and three or four tortillas, was all that I was allowed. The supper was the same as my breakfast. For a Mexican, this, in ordinary circumstances, would have been sufficient, as they are very small eaters; but for me, after my long fasting and sickness, it was

barely sufficient to keep soul and body together. But the deficiency was supplied in part by occasional receipts of money.

I continued my visits to the doctor's, and in one of these visits he asked what was my trade or profession. He seemed anxious to do something for me that would be of permanent utility, as, from all appearance, my residence among them was to be a long one. The steward in the hospital was a shoe-maker, and worked at his trade when not otherwise engaged. I worked with him until I became tolerably expert at that business; in fact, I could make a passable shoe. I therefore told the doctor of this, and also that if a little money was furnished me, I would undertake to support myself by this kind of work. He then gave me two dollars, with which I purchased materials and commenced work. The first I made were women's shoes. I worked up all my stock and then sold it. On striking a balance, I found that my work netted me just three cents per day. This interesting discovery rather discouraged me in my attempt to obtain money in this way. I then undertook to make men's shoes. For fear of the worst, I first engaged a pair, bought the stock, and then made them. These were finished off so as to look tolerably well; but they were so poorly made that they did not wear two weeks. I made another pair, but could not sell them, so I kept them on hand a long time. At last fortune favored me, for one day I found in the public square a man selling shirts. This was just what I needed; so I plied him with liquor until he was, as the sailor's say, three sheets in the wind, then took him down to

the hospital, and gave him the shoes for a good, new shirt. Thus ended my effort at shoe-making.

About this time, some of the prisoners who had been left at Queretaro came through on their way to Mexico, the rest having died. Why I was not sent along with them I can not say. I called on the officer commanding in that city, and earnestly entreated for permission to go, but it was in vain. I almost every day heard of the progress of General Scott. The news of the battles of Huamantla, Cerro Gordo, and Contreras was rapidly spread through the country. The bulletins were boastful, and full of misrepresentation. They would tell of the defeat and flight of the Americans, and the next day would come the news of the further advance of Scott. Finally we heard of the investment of the capital. But I am getting ahead of my story.

I will now give a description of San Juan del Rio. It contains about five thousand inhabitants. There is but one street that can be properly called a street; the rest are narrow, like alleys or lanes. The city is on one side bounded by a river, which in the dry season is so low that one might walk across on the stones without wetting his shoes; but in the rainy season I have known the water to rise five feet in one hour. It frequently overflows its banks, and forms a perfect sea. The part next to the river is protected by a thick and solid wall. The city is built without any regard to order or regularity, each one building where it best suits his fancy; consequently the streets are narrow and very crooked. The houses are made of adobe, or unburned brick. These adobes are made

in the form of brick, about eighteen inches long, ten wide, and three thick, dried in the sun; and when of sufficient hardness, they are put into the walls forming the house. The length of the adobe forms the thickness of the wall.

The roofs are generally covered with a sort of reed, and made sufficiently steep to carry off the water. The houses of the rich are covered with burned brick, and thickly plastered over, both inside and out, with cement, which renders them impervious to water. The roof is made slightly to descend, just enough to carry off the water. The rooms are generally rather destitute of furniture, containing only a bed and some benches to sit on, chairs being a luxury which only the rich can afford. Tables are not in common use. When eating, the people sit down on the ground, take their dishes on their lap, and eat with their tortillas and spoons, knives and forks being rarely used. Tortillas are made of Indian corn. It is first soaked in weak lye for a few hours to remove the shells, then mashed or ground up fine, then kneaded with the hands until it is like a common pancake; it is then baked on an earthen griddle. If eaten when warm, it is very good. This is all the bread the poorer classes have, and it is likewise used by the rich twice a day. Some women support themselves by making tortillas to sell; they can be seen in the Plaza every hour in the day, with their baskets under their rebasas or shawls, crying their tortillas.*

In almost every part of the city are large gardens,

* The preceding paragraph would apply to other Mexican towns as well as to San Juan.

sometimes occupying four or five acres, in which all kinds of fruit are cultivated, such as apples, pears, cherries, grapes, figs, plantains, granadas, and numerous other kinds, both of tropical and temperate productions. I have been invited many a time to go into these gardens and eat fruit, accompanied, too, by some of the great people of San Juan. Indeed, so much in favor had I grown with the wealthier classes, that they have offered to advance me capital sufficient to go into business, on condition that I would renounce my country and become a citizen of Mexico; and they often expressed a determination to keep me there after the war closed.

At this time, one of the priests, by the name of Romero, had a fandango (or, in common parlance, a ball), to which a large party was invited. I went in, and as soon as I entered, before I could take my seat, a bottle of excellent wine was handed me. I drank some, and then sat down to hear their music and see the dancing. The music I did not admire much; but the dancing was beautiful, so graceful and light they seemed not to touch the floor. Some of the ladies were dressed with a splendor that I never before saw equaled. The wine was again passed round, and this was repeated so often that I became rather foggy, and I thought some of the rest were so too; for soon a young priest, who had just taken orders, thinking to show off a little learning, sat himself down by me, and began to question me on my religious principles. He asked me first if I was a Catholic. I told him yes. "Do you believe in the Trinity?" "Yes." "Do you believe in the

mystery of the Virgin?" "Yes." "Do you believe in the doctrine of transubstantiation?" I replied, "I do not understand you," although I understood him perfectly well. He then put the question in another form; still I could not understand him, and still he persevered in his endeavors to make me answer. But, failing in all, he got out of patience, and in an angry manner arose, pointed his finger, and shaking it in an emphatic manner, said, "You are a Protestant." Being heated with wine, and therefore easily excited, I arose, and in an angry and defiant tone declared I was a Protestant, and added that I was a prisoner of war, and the Mexican government was bound to protect me, and dared them to touch a hair of my head. I know not what might have been said further had not my friend, Priest Miranda, at this instant come up, and said that he wished us to be friends, and retain no hard feelings. He then brought the wine, turned out some in glasses, gave me one, and insisted on our drinking to our mutual friendship. I took the proffered glass, but with the firm determination of giving them another blow. He drank his glass off; I raised mine to my lips, and said, "Here is success to the armies of the United States, hoping that peace will not be made until the whole of Mexico is annexed." I then put down my glass, and said, "This, ladies and gentlemen, is the toast that I drink; how do you like it?" I looked around, as though waiting for an answer, but no reply was made; all were too much surprised at my boldness to make any. I soon saw that I had gone too far; and, thinking that my absence was better

than my company, I took my hat and left. None opposed my departure. As soon as I got into the street, fearing a pursuit, I ran with all speed to the hospital, a distance of one mile. I hurried into my room, and barricaded it from the inside, to prevent a forcible entrance, should any be attempted. I remained here till the next morning, when I was awakened by the steward, who had brought me my breakfast; soon after which the young priest, accompanied by the doctor and priest Miranda, came to the hospital to arrange the difficulty between us. We both acknowledged ourselves too hasty, and a little too much excited with wine, &c., and so the matter dropped. It was soon noised abroad that we were reconciled, after which I was in just as good favor as ever.

During the time of which I am now speaking, a portion of the Mexican army passed through San Juan on their way to Mexico. Ten thousand passed one day, and ten thousand the next, under the command of Generals Valencia and Rincon. The former commanded the infantry; the latter, jointly with Torrejon, the cavalry. Both were subsequently killed at Mexico. Valencia was a good and meritorious officer; Rincon was a noted coward; and Torrejon was known as a robber, and distinguished for his gasconade and cowardly conduct on the field of battle. The wealth and influence of Rincon and Torrejon were boundless, and therefore they could not be deprived of their command. Santa Anna, also, has been accused of being leagued with some of the most noted bandit leaders; he is said to have given them information where and when a successful blow could be struck, and then

gave them commissions in the army, he having a certain share of the plunder in consideration of his information and protection. This was said to have occurred when he was president; and in this manner they accounted for his vast wealth. This statement I saw in one of the leading journals of Guadalajara, and never saw it contradicted; I therefore have so much reason to believe it is true.

Santa Anna first entered the army as second lieutenant under General Mijia, if I am not mistaken in the name. This man discovered in him superior talent, and took immediate measures to secure his promotion. From this he rapidly rose until he became general; and finally, by the influence of the army alone, he became president. When in the chair, he caused to be tried and shot, for some trifle, that friend who had made him what he was. It was also boldly said, at the time I was in Mexico, that when he received any money to pay the troops, he first liberally paid himself, then handed the balance of the money to his officers, who paid themselves in the same way, and out of the small remnant paid the soldiers, who actually never received one quarter of their regular pay. It was also said that Santa Anna was in the habit of embezzling one half, at least, of the public money that came into his hands: that he attempted to rob the churches in the city of Mexico is matter of history. It was this which caused that tremendous excitement against him which ended in his downfall and ultimate expulsion from Mexico after its capture.

At San Juan I saw an officer, holding the rank of

captain, who was a noted robber; his name is Thomas Gonsalez. I was told by some of the San Patricio* company that this man owned two large blocks of houses in San Luis Potosi, all of which he had accumulated by robbery; and they related some incidents of an expedition in which they had borne a part. After the battle of Buena Vista, when the Mexican army had returned to San Luis, this Gonsalez obtained a commission from the governor to select twelve of this company, and go back to Saltillo on a robbing expedition. The governor was to clothe and arm the men, and have one half of the proceeds. Accordingly, they started, and in every town they came to they robbed. The terror of their leader's name (for he was well known) produced instant obedience to all his wishes. In going to Saltillo and back it took them six weeks, during which time they cleared some six thousand dollars, exclusive of their heavy outlays.

The cavalry under Rincon was really a good-looking body of men; they were well armed, well clothed, and well mounted. In fact, had I not seen them on previous occasions, I should have supposed them to be rather a formidable body of men to encounter. They had with them some twenty pieces of heavy artillery, all of which eventually fell into General Scott's hands. With them was the San Patricio company, commanded by Captain Riley, who is now a general in their service. Lieutenant Stevenson, formerly a private in the eighth regiment of our in-

* These men were deserters from the American army, and joined the Mexicans. Some had received commissions; but the majority were worse off than brutes. They numbered two hundred.

fantry, was one of these; he wore an officer's uniform; but so seldom did he see any of his pay with which to clothe himself, that he was quite ragged, and his shoes were almost completely worn out. Dearly did he pay for the whistle; for he was despised by the Mexican officers, those especially who made any pretensions to being gentlemen, and in the battle of Buena Vista he was unfortunate enough to lose his right arm. The whole of this company were in a most miserable condition. They rested here two days, and then passed on.

I now began to hear of the progress of Scott; that in all the battles fought between Vera Cruz and Mexico, the Americans had been successful; and also that they had now invested the city. But the Mexicans, having forces so greatly superior to ours in numbers, were most sanguine as to the ultimate result. Daily expresses came, bearing intelligence of the progress of the war. The first news was favorable to our arms; then came the news that Scott was forced to retreat. This was received with universal joy. All the bells of the city began to ring, rockets were fired, and an intense excitement prevailed all day. Many of the citizens came to see me, and asked what I thought of that. "Very valiant are the Mexicans," said they. My reply was, "Yes, very, since General Taylor, with four thousand five hundred men, defeated and completely routed twenty-two thousand of Santa Anna's best troops." I also referred them to Monterey, and the battles of the eighth and ninth of May, for further proof of the valor of the Mexican soldiers. I also added, that if the

Americans retreated, it was simply to gain a new position, as they never *could* be driven—a statement which subsequently proved to be correct. This language set rather firmly; they doubted, and offered to bet. This I had no money to do; but I offered to bet that which was of infinitely more consequence to me, viz., my ultimate liberation. I offered to wager my liberty against one hundred dollars. If they lost, the money was mine; if I lost, I was to be no more subject to exchange, but should remain with them for life. This was a queer offer on my part, but I was confident of winning. They declined my offer, but turned and walked off, cursing the Yankees.

The next day another express came in, bringing news of the capture of some of the most important points of their defensive works, the rout of their cavalry, &c., &c. This news made them look rather crest-fallen; no bells were rung, and no rockets were fired; groups of men might be seen around every corner, with consternation depicted in their countenances, conversing on the subject of their calamities, and wondering where and when the victorious career of our army would terminate. They daily expected that Scott would follow up his victory by marching to Queretaro, where no means of defense existed. In fact, no defense could be made at any point; another army could not be collected. On the one already defeated and dispersed hung all their hopes. In a few days came news of the capture of the city. It was now my turn to rejoice, and I did so to my heart's content; for, taking what money I had, I bought some rockets and fired them nearly all day. Every

one knew for what I did this, but no one molested me. This was to me the proudest day of my life: I gloried in being an American, although a prisoner. In a few days the news was officially published in the papers in Mexico, which contained also the treaty for the exchange of prisoners, in which both parties were bound to give up all they held.

Parts of the Mexican army began to return; straggling bands, parties of a few hundred, came in every day, under no order or discipline whatever. In the course of four or five days, five thousand passed through, the officers looking gloomy and crest-fallen; some appeared to feel as though it was a disgrace to be a Mexican officer. Last of all came the Mexican Congress; they had abandoned their capital, and were now going to Queretaro to hold a session. But Santa Anna was not with them. I inquired where he was; they replied that he was going to Vera Cruz to leave the country; curses, loud and deep, were heaped on his head, and the excitement of the citizens ran very high against him. Could he have been found, it was their firm and expressed determination to kill him. I was told that in the capital they carried stones in their hands for that purpose; but the object of their fury was safely concealed in a corn-field hard by the city.

Occasionally a few of the battalion of San Patricio would arrive; of the two hundred, fifty did not now remain, large numbers being taken prisoners by the Americans, and as deserters, tried and executed. The few that did remain were formed into a body-guard, and retained in the service of the commander-in-chief.

CHAPTER V.

I am detained after the other Prisoners have been exchanged.—Application to the commanding Officer. — Unsatisfactory Answer. — Plan, and Attempt an Escape.—Apprehended and brought back.—Confined in a Cell, chained and manacled.—Renewed Plans of Escape. — Frustrated by an Accident. — New Project. — This proves successful. — Mexican Barbarities.—Important Information obtained. — Intestine Troubles in Mexico during the War.—Prepare for Traveling. — Start for the Pacific. — Arrive, by night Journeys, at Queretaro. — Information obtained regarding my future Route. — Haciendas.—Wander from the right Road.—Mode of Traveling.—Celaya.—Mexican Women.—Difficulties of the Journey.—Fertility of the Soil. — Productions. — Tobacco. — Sugar Manufacture. — Horse-shoeing.—Catering for Food.—Change my Mode of Traveling.—Consequent Danger. — Expedient to procure Food.—Placed in a Dilemma.—How relieved.—Bad Effects of Exposure and Fatigue.—Removed by the good Offices of a Stranger.—Appearance and indigenous Productions of the Country. — Indications of Volcanic Action. — Chapparal.—Cactuses. — Century Plant. — Horned Frog.

SEVERAL days had elapsed since an exchange of prisoners had been made, and I was still detained. I determined, therefore, to ascertain the cause of this unjust proceeding. Accordingly, I wrote to the commanding officer in that city, asking information relative to my future destination. To this letter I received no answer. In a few days I wrote another, a copy of which follows. It was not dated, as I did not know the day of the month.

"*To his Honor the Commandante of San Juan del Rio.*

"SIR,—Having by the fate of war fallen into the military power of Mexico, myself and comrades (they being now in Mexico) experienced at the hands of our captors nothing but continued cruelty; and not until my arrival at this place have I known what good treatment is. But I am proud to acknowledge that I have, during my residence in this city, with but few exceptions, received marked kindness from the hands of those who recognize in me an enemy. Still, sir, I need not always remain a prisoner; and I am informed that a treaty has been made and entered into by and betwen General Scott on the part of the United States, and Santa Anna on the part of Mexico, in which treaty it is stipulated that all prisoners held by the respective parties should be given up. As this is official, there is no possible room to doubt it. I therefore ask why I am detained, contrary to the stipulations of this treaty. Is not the faith of Mexico pledged to its strict fulfillment? And my being here now, is it not barefaced evidence of treachery and duplicity on her part?

"Sir, believing that I am asking no more than is my right, by the rules and regulations of war, I am thus bold in addressing you, having all confidence in your honor. I believe this to be sufficient. Should I receive some information regarding my destination, it will be considered as the greatest favor done to, sir, your most humble servant,

"W. W. CARPENTER."

I sealed this letter and gave it to the doctor, who translated it, and gave it to the officer. In a few days I received a verbal answer, through my friend the doctor, stating that I was to remain here; for, although an exchange had been made, no orders had yet been received to give me up, therefore I was to remain. But this I determined not to do. The idea of the possibility of making my escape was now forced on my mind; and the more I thought of it, the more practicable it seemed. It was requisite for me, however, to form some plan relative to the route, means of support, &c. The distance to Mexico, I ascertained, was only one hundred and fifty miles. This I could easily walk in three days. By a few cautious inquiries, I satisfied myself as to the road I should keep, and what towns I should pass through. The risk I knew was great, but the object to be gained was greater. The thought of being again restored to my country, home, and friends, rose superior to that of the risk I was running.

I saved some little money, and one night, when all was silent, and not a soul was stirring, I picked up all my clothes and started. I got out of the city without being discovered, and traveled all that night, and next day until near noon, without stopping. Being now very tired, I sat down on the side of a hill, a short distance from the road, under the shade of a bush, and began to eat a luncheon. I had been there probably half an hour, when, on looking in the direction I had come, I saw a sergeant and a file of men in pursuit of me. Escape was impossible, for they saw me at the same moment that I saw them. They

were six to one, on horseback, and well armed, while I was on foot and unarmed. Had I had even a sword, I should have tried hard to preserve my liberty. They put spurs to their horses, rushed up to me, dismounted, seized and bound my hands, placed me on a horse, and then tied my feet round under the horse's belly. So tight did they tie me that I had not room or power to move. The man whose horse I was on then mounted in front of me, wound another rope around us both, thus lashing us together, and then started back to San Juan.

Thus were my fondest hopes blasted in a moment. The prospect of freedom had made my spirits elastic; but now I was conducted like a felon to the place from which I had come. As a matter of course, I expected the worst of treatment. They hurried on with all possible speed, constantly ridiculing me for the failure of my attempt, and reviving my drooping spirits with the prospect of being shot as soon as we arrived at San Juan.

Sitting on the horse behind the saddle, and being lashed in such a manner that I could not move one way or the other, the rapid rate at which we were traveling almost killed me. But there was no rest until late at night, when we arrived at San Juan. It seems that I had got about fifty miles on the road toward Mexico. They immediately put me in jail, in a narrow, dark, and damp cell, where, without a blanket or any comfortable clothing, I was forced to pass a miserable night; a sentinel stood at my door all night, as though the thick and massive doors and huge lock was not enough to keep me with security.

I verily believe they thought I was an evil spirit in human form.

I passed a sleepless and dreary night, although I yet had plenty of company, for vermin completely covered me; and the next morning I was full of blotches and sores, from the crown of my head to the sole of my foot. Into this lonely cell the rays of the sun never entered; perpetual darkness reigned; and the only way that I knew when it was day was by the creaking of the lock, and the squeaking of the rusty hinges of the door as they opened it in the morning.

I now supposed that I should be liberated; but they brought me a dish of meat, and, after eating, a soldier came in with a chain, which they quickly fastened to my ankle, and then made fast to the wall. A perfect load of chains and manacles was now brought, some fastened round my waist, and the rest round my wrists, and the whole made fast to the wall. After doing this they left me, locking the door as they went out. I begged them to kill me at once, instead of heaping injury upon injury by subjecting me to this load of iron. But I might as well have begged for mercy from fiends as from these devils incarnate. Their countenances gleamed with intense hate, and their souls exulted in deeds of cruelty.

Victuals were given me but twice a day, and then in very small quantity. I therefore saw before me another prospect of starvation. I would here mention, that when I was taken this last time, the soldiers took what I had, and also the clothes that I had not on at the time of my apprehension. Conse-

quently I was now reduced to a miserable and pitiable condition. The irons that were put on me, they exultingly said, weighed thirty-six pounds. In utter despair did I hear their parting footsteps. My spirit was completely broken. In unutterable agony I fell to the earth, and in insensibility I for a time forgot the horrors of my situation. When I recovered myself, I prayed God that death in mercy might come and relieve me from this loathsome dungeon.

In a day or two I began to take a more rational view of my case, and to devise means to escape. As I well knew that my life would be the forfeit, should I be detected, great caution was essential. It was necessary to drive away the sentinel from before my door, at least so far that he would not hear what I was doing. I tried several experiments, but all of them failed. As a last resort, I took the pitcher in which they put the water for me to drink, filled it with the filth of my cell, watched my opportunity, threw it on him, and completely besmeared him from head to foot. One or two more applications of this kind induced him to keep at some little distance from my door. This was just what I desired.

I now set to work to divest myself from my irons, particularly my hands; the operation was extremely painful, as I was forced to contract my hands so as to enable me to slip the irons over them. After two or three days' trial I at length succeeded, but in doing so I nearly stripped them of their covering. To divert the attention of persons from the noise made by the chains, I kept up a sort of singing; by this they were completely deceived; and as no one ever

came into the cell to examine my irons, I was in no fear of detection from that source. Having disengaged one hand, I made use of the bolt which had secured it, and which was about ten inches long, to bend the irons of the other so as to enable me to slip it off and on at pleasure. In this I was successful. Now both hands were at liberty. I also succeeded in getting the chain from off my waist; this I did by twisting a link and breaking it. With the bolts I pried the staple from the wall. I was now, comparatively speaking, at liberty.

My dungeon was an outside cell, and by digging through the wall next the yard, egress could be had. The exact situation of the jail and the back yard I became acquainted with during the time that I had the liberty of the city. This knowledge I was now in hopes of putting to good use. Surrounding the yard was a wall some ten feet high. On one side of the yard, and next the wall, were the remains of an old house not quite so high as the yard wall; by this I hoped to mount to the top, and gain the street. When I had mounted this, my only resource was to jump down and make the best of my way off. I still determined to go to Mexico, though by another route than the one I formerly took.

This plan being settled, I now began to dig a hole through the wall. I would here remark that the sentry had been withdrawn, and this afforded me a better chance to act. The wall, being made of adobe, was not very solid; yet, as I had no sharp tools, the work was very slow. I succeeded, however, in digging nearly through, and in two more days would

have accomplished it, but for an unfortunate accident. It seems that some noise had been heard, sufficient, at least, to excite suspicion that all was not right. Accordingly, one day the jailer came in with his guard and examined my irons. Judge what his astonishment must have been on finding me freed from them all except those around my feet. My work in the wall he did not discover, probably owing to the darkness of the room. However, he sent for a blacksmith, who came and riveted them on again, and then bored a hole through one of the posts beside the door, and riveted the end of the chain through that; then he exultingly said that if I now broke them loose or got them off my hands, he would take my place.

In this manner was my second project defeated. I now began to contrive a third project; but how to begin or what to do, I did not exactly know. I was satisfied, however, that if I was once out of this accursed hole, half of the work would be done, and I would eventually succeed in escaping from them. I also became well satisfied that stratagem alone was required to effect this object. The jailer now entered my cell twice a day, examined my irons, and left my victuals and water. I determined to make this circumstance serve my purpose; I feigned sickness, and left untouched the food that he brought me. This I did two days, when, being alarmed lest I should die, he sent word to the commandante that I was in a dying condition. The doctor was then sent to visit me. By his orders I was removed to another room, my irons taken off, and a bundle of straw was given me to lie on.

By my sufferings in this jail I was again reduced almost to a skeleton; but, under the doctor's care, I soon recovered my former healthy state. I now urged him to procure my liberation, promising almost any thing that would be required in order to obtain it. He made no direct reply, but soon went out. My main object in wishing to get the doctor here was to exert himself in my behalf.

The next day the doctor returned with the commandante and Priest Miranda. Several questions were asked of me relative to my motives in running away, &c., to all of which I gave correct answers. I was then informed that if I would take an oath to make no more attempts to go to Mexico, I might be set at liberty. This was a dead set; however, I determined to take it; it was administered, and I was set at liberty. At the same time, orders were given me to report myself every night at sunset to the commandante.

I stepped forth once more a free man, but fired with feelings of deadly vengeance for my cruel and unjust confinement for the crime of trying to regain my liberty, an act which any man would have done in my situation. Besides, I was robbed of the small quantity of clothes that I had been able to procure. All this was as money lent, and I determined that not one cent should be lost.

Quarters were again assigned me in the hospital, and I remained quite peaceable for a few days, not knowing which way to turn myself. About this time a detachment of cavalry, the same that Santa Anna had taken as his escort, passed through San Juan; but

they had deserted from their commander, and left him to find his way to Vera Cruz alone, and in the best manner he could. The officer who was second in command I recognized as one that was with General Urrea at the time I was taken prisoner. I conversed with him some time, during which he related several barbarities that the Mexican soldiers had committed on that sanguinary field. He said that after our surrender, and the burning of the wagons, &c., they rode over the field, cut the hearts out of the dead bodies of some of our soldiers, and hung them on the bushes. Some who were wounded, and yet alive, had their eyes dug out and stuck in their wounds; others were mutilated in a shocking manner. In this horrible procedure they were not checked by their commanding officers.

This barbarous manner of carrying on war so disgusted this officer that he made application to his government to be put in another command, a request which was granted; and he was accordingly transferred to a command under Torrejon. He was from one of the first families of Mexico; his father had once been president, but had died some years before. He spoke English well, and had been educated at Cincinnati, Ohio. He said that he was then going to Guadalajara, and thence to Guanahuato. I then asked him how far the former place was from the Pacific coast. He replied, ninety leagues. I then asked the names of some of the most important places between San Juan and that city. He named them; and I obtained from him additional information relative to the route to be taken to get there. I made

these inquiries, because, while conversing with him, the idea of getting to the Pacific had occurred to me; and I asked these questions in such a manner as not to excite any suspicion relative to my intentions. In fact, he could have had none; for it was one of the most desperate attempts, I believe, that a man ever undertook, especially considering that it was very dangerous for any man to travel without a passport, and that it was impossible for me to get one. Some of the difficulties of the attempt I had calculated on, and so great and insurmountable did they appear that I partly gave it up.

The officer above mentioned confirmed the reports relative to the intense excitement against Santa Anna, and said that, after the surrender of Mexico, he left with an escort of some four thousand lancers; but, at the time that the officer and his division left, not more than one thousand remained, and his desertion reduced it to one half. The probability was that the rest would leave him in a few days. He then said that nearly every battle that had been fought with the Americans had been followed by one between themselves: those of the eighth and ninth of May were followed by a revolution at Mexico; that of Monterey by one at Guadalajara, the effects of which I saw when in that city; and that of Buena Vista was followed by another revolution at Mexico, caused by Santa Anna's attempting to take the property of the Church wherewith to carry on the war. This the priests resisted; and they employed all the young men in the city to defend their property. They succeeded in creating a great excitement, and enlisting

a great many men. They fortified the city, and made every preparation for defense.

At length old Santa appeared before the city, and matters were compromised, so that no battle was fought; neither did Santa get any gold or silver belonging to the Church. After the capitulation of Mexico, a quarrel and a skirmish occurred between Santa Anna and Valencia.

Next morning this officer and the detachment left; but he left behind him one ray of hope that I might yet escape, although he was unconscious of the fact. I daily pondered on this conversation; and the more I reflected, the less seemed to be the danger and the difficulty. In the mean time, I began to make preparations for a start somewhere. I asked for and obtained a new suit of clothes of the priest, and borrowed some money from some of the citizens.

I now determined to go to the Pacific; for my oath bound me only as to Mexico, and not to any other part. Still they no doubt regarded me as released on parole of honor, and bound not to go to any part until authorized by the government; but I considered that I was bound to get away, if possible, let the parole be what it might. I had been out of jail ten days, during which time I was watched somewhat closely throughout the day, and in the night the hospital doors were shut and bolted in such a manner that it was supposed to be impossible for me to get out. I, however, made the attempt, and succeeded; and with my bundle of clothes I started toward Queretaro, a distance of fifteen leagues. As near as I could judge, it was about twelve at night. I traveled briskly

until morning, when I hid myself, to lie by for the day. I lay concealed in a thick cluster of bushes, where I could see every one that passed on the road without myself being seen.

During the day I saw several citizens and the commandante of San Juan pass me toward Queretaro, but whether in pursuit of me or not I can not say. I carried provisions for three days, and therefore there was no fear of starving for the present. As soon as it was dark I again commenced my journey; I trudged along, through mud and mire, at a slow and tedious rate. The rain fell in torrents. This, combined with the pitchy darkness of the night, almost stopped my further progress. Still I persevered, and kept on until the next morning, when I again hid myself in the bushes. As near as I could calculate, these two nights I had traveled twenty miles. When I stopped, I was so completely worn out that I almost immediately fell asleep, and slept nearly all day.

At night I again resumed my journey. It continued raining all night, and I now began to feel stiff and sore. My clothes had not been dry since I first started; and, in fact, they were stiff with mud.

The fourth night I came in sight of Queretaro. I went through the city, and up to the factory, where were some Englishmen, from whom I was in hopes of getting some assistance in procuring a passport, some provisions, and other things. I hid myself in the bushes until morning; and as soon as they were out around, after breakfast, I went to some of them and asked a little assistance on my journey to Guadalajara. They treated me with supreme contempt,

calling me a deserter, and other opprobrious epithets. An Irishman, however, was here, who took me away from the rest, went to his house, and gave me something to eat. To him I related my history, and that my present determination was to reach the Pacific, get on board an American vessel or man-of-war, and return home. In proof of the truth of my story, I gave him my notes to examine, that I had kept up to that time. He tried to dissuade me from going, pictured the dangers of the journey, its length, &c., &c.; but all this could not intimidate me. I had counted the cost, I said, and was prepared for any exigency that might occur. I then asked him if he would do me the favor to get me a passport under the character of one of the San Patricio company, for then I could get on safely. He replied that at the present time a great excitement existed against that body on account of the result of the late battles in Mexico, in consequence of which none of the company had been to the city for several weeks; therefore it was not in the power of any of them to help me. He gave me much good advice, and many directions relative to my journey; and when it came night I took leave of my kind friend, contrasting in my own mind his conduct toward me with that of those John Bulls to whom I had spoken in the morning.

After leaving the factory, I took a circuitous route, through the back streets of the city, to the road leading to Guadalajara. I this night traveled some twenty miles, and went to the mountains to rest during the day. The valley through which I was going was very level, and in the vicinity where I was, well cul-

tivated. The inhabitants were not scattered along the road, but dwelt in small villages, where the owner or dueño lived. His laborers always lived in houses scattered around their master's. These haciendas are not unfrequently ten, and even fifteen miles apart.

While in the mountains I built a fire, where I roasted some corn and potatoes that I took from the fields in the valley below. My course I knew to be west; and the only way I could lay my course was by noticing which way the sun went down, and, when it was clear, looking for the north star. Even then I was liable to lose my track, for so many roads led off from the main one that I was constantly liable to take the wrong one. This, in fact, was the case two days after leaving Queretaro. The road I took appeared to be plainer and more traveled than the other, hence I concluded it was the one for me to take. It led off through another valley, and directly off from the road I wished to take.

I, however, continued my journey ten nights, lying by during the day. When I came to a large town, I avoided it by making a circuit entirely round it, and coming into a road—as near as I could judge, the same one—on the opposite side. I continued to travel thus for several days longer, when one morning I was discovered by the smoke of my fire by a poor ranchero. He asked me to his house, and I went; he placed before me some victuals, of which I ate heartily. The fellow seemed kindly disposed, and not very inquisitive. Of him I asked the road to Celaya, that being one of the first towns I should come to after leaving Queretaro. I then told him I

was going to Guadalajara. He then told me of my mistake; that I had taken the wrong road, and was some fifty or sixty leagues out of my way. The town I had passed was San Miguel, and the only way for me to get back on the right road was to return the same way I came, there being no other road near there on account of the mountains. At all events, this route was the nearest for me to take.

This was a gloomy consideration, to think that so much time and distance was lost, and that the danger I had passed must be encountered again. However, the die was cast; it was now neck or nothing. My life and liberty were at stake on the one hand, and an ignominious death awaited me on the other. With these two important considerations, I cheerfully retraced my route. The rainy season had not yet passed, though it did not rain as much as formerly; still, nearly every night I was wet through to the skin. The day, however, was usually pleasant. At last I reached the same valley that I should have kept at first, having traveled an entire month without gaining a single inch of headway.

The appearance of the country that I passed through was pretty much the same as the parts already described, only not quite so much cultivated, doubtless owing to the fact that there was less water to irrigate it.

Having found the right road, I set forward with good courage, not in the least disheartened by my late misfortune. After traveling two nights I reached Celaya. This town I passed through just after dark, having been concealed in sight of it all day. I found

it quite a large and beautiful town; I made no stop, however, but passed through as quickly as possible. I was wrapped in my blanket just like a Mexican, to avoid being distinguished from them; and by this means I went safely through. That night I traveled about twenty miles, and in the morning went to the mountains for concealment.

On my way there I came to a rancho. Some men were around, and just mounting their horses apparently to go on a journey. I waited till they were gone. Seeing no man about the house, I soon after went in, and was welcomed by the women, of whom I asked the favor of something to eat; a request with which they at once complied. To the honor of the Mexican women be it said, that when addressed in a respectful manner, they always supplied me with whatever I needed, if it was in their power to bestow it. I then asked of them several questions relative to my route, all of which they readily answered; I also ascertained that the men who had gone away in the morning would not return till night. On hearing this, I asked the privilege of resting there a while to take a good sleep. This they readily granted.

Behold me now sleeping in a house for the first time in six weeks! As a general thing, I did not think it safe to go to a rancho if there were any men about, and only in one instance had I done so since leaving San Juan. I might possibly not have been molested at any time, but I did not like to run the risk, at least, till I was out of hearing of Queretaro. I considered it best to pick a precarious living in the mountains and sleep there, rather than trust this peo-

ple, of whom it might be said that their dwellings are "the habitations of cruelty," and whose prominent characteristics are robbery, treachery, and bloodshed. Toward night I left this truly hospitable roof, and pursued my way through the fields—off the main road, yet parallel with it—till dark, when I again resumed the highway.

This night I passed through another town safely, being molested by the barking of the dogs, but fortunately meeting with no inhabitants. The valley had now contracted to about half its usual width, and was quite thickly settled, a circumstance which proved rather annoying to me. For the most part I kept the mountains during several nights, because of the difficulty of getting by these houses unperceived and unmolested. The danger was greater than in a village, for this reason: should any one be stirring, or any unusual barking of the dogs occur, it would at once create suspicion that all was not right, and a pursuit would be the result. I, however, got along safely; but I was rather put to it for food. Two days had now passed, and I had found nothing to eat; on the night of the third, I saw a little squirrel, gave chase, and killed it. But I was so near some houses that I dared not make a fire to roast it, and withal so hungry that I could not wait that process, so I just skinned it, and ate part of it raw; the other part I saved for my breakfast, and this I thought was the best meal I had ever eaten.

The land here is very fertile, and capable of producing two crops per annum, and it is cultivated to the utmost of its capacity. In addition to corn, beans,

and red pepper, tobacco and sugar-cane are raised with facility and in great abundance. The two latter afford rich returns to the grower, but with regard to tobacco, so many restrictions are placed on it that but few raise it. As the law now is, all the tobacco that is raised must be sold to government at a fixed price, the producer first getting a license to raise it from the proper authority. It is then manufactured at the expense of government into cigars and cigarritos, and sold to the estancos by the wholesale. Estancos are houses licensed to sell cigars and cigarritos. Tobacco that is imported has to pay a duty so high that it in effect amounts to a prohibition. To prevent the smuggling of tobacco, guards are stationed at regular distances, who have charge of a certain extent of territory. Notwithstanding their vigilance, large quantities are annually smuggled; and during my traveling in the night, I saw several caravans of mules and asses loaded with this article. They acted like myself, traveled by night, and laid by in the daytime.

As I have now for a moment left my narrative, I will describe their manner of manufacturing sugar. The mill is a frame made firm and solid, about four feet high and five long, and from two to two and a half wide. Two cylinders, made of solid wood, about two feet long and from fifteen to twenty inches in diameter, are filled with thick, heavy cogs, in such a manner as to mash the cane nicely; these are placed upright in the frame. Below the whole is a trough, so fixed that it will catch the juice as it is pressed out in the mill above. A long sweep is fastened to

one of these cylinders, to which the horse is attached. When the cane is ground and pressed, the juice is carried to the kettle, which is placed over an arch, and is as large as a potash-kettle; here it is boiled down until it is thick, and then placed in earthen vessels to cool, after which it is wrapped in husks and sent to market. On the largest plantations, where the sugar-cane is raised extensively, they have not apparatus to make over two or three barrels per day, so little idea have they of machinery to do a large quantity of work and with little labor.

To show how they stand as to mechanical work, I will describe their manner of shoeing a horse. It takes from three to five, according to the disposition of the horse. No. 1 twists a rope round the horse's upper lip and holds him. No. 2 holds up the foot for No. 3 to pare the hoof and fit the shoe. If the horse is fractious, No. 4 stands by ready with the nails and iron with which to clinch them. To assist in doing this, No. 5 helps to hold the horse steady. From this it may justly be inferred that they consider it is a vastly hard job to shoe a horse. It is indeed a job not unfrequently requiring a whole day. I will now resume my narrative.

The next morning, after finishing my squirrel, I hunted around for something else to eat. In the mountains generally I could occasionally find a little wild fruit; but here, for some reason or other, none could be found. Houses were not far off. I therefore determined to go and see what could be seen without exposing myself too far. I gradually crept up to a house, in the rear of which, in a yard, I saw

some meat hanging up to dry. There was quite a large quantity, and I resolved to have some of it at any rate; but as people were around the house all the while, it was dangerous to attempt it then; so I lay concealed in the bushes nearly all day, when, to my great satisfaction, all hands left the house just before night; not a soul remained behind; and when they had got sufficiently distant, I went into the yard, secured what meat I could carry, and then hastened with all speed back to the mountains. This I considered decidedly the richest haul I had made; it certainly was made just in the nick of time, as without it I believe I should have perished with hunger. Being partly dried, I could eat it without roasting.

I did not remain long in that vicinity, but hastened on as fast as possible to avoid a pursuit, should any be made. I traveled all that night, during which time I made thirty miles. The next morning I came to a ranch, where lived an old man and woman; of them I obtained some tortillas, roasted some of my meat, and made a very good breakfast. I had now been on the road about eight weeks, and thought that for the future I might travel in the daytime and lie by during the night, and I changed my mode of traveling accordingly.

That day I traveled fifteen miles, and kept the main road all the time. The next day an incident occurred that very nearly frustrated all my plans. I was going along at a good pace, when, looking back, I saw, about half a mile behind me, four men, riding on horseback at a rapid rate. I at once suspected that they were after me, and began to look for means

of escape. The mountains were one mile distant on either side of me; the land was all cleared, and not a bush was to be seen. In any case, should I be seen running, it would excite suspicion and cause a pursuit; so I turned off into a corn-field, got over the fence very deliberately, and slowly walked some rods into the corn, then threw down my bundle and went to work pulling up weeds, and occasionally a hill of corn, especially when it was in my way. By this time the men on horseback came up, and when in front of me halted. I worked harder than ever, and they soon passed on. When they were out of sight, I took my things under my arm and started for the mountains.

For two entire days I did not go into the road again. What corn and potatoes I got enabled me to save my meat till this time, and afforded me plenty to eat. After this my eatables began to grow scarce again, making it necessary for me to look and find where another supply could be had. All that day and the next I could find none, but the third day I found some at a house at which there were only some children. What to do I knew not. The thought of robbing children was hard to bear, especially as they had previously given me something to eat. Under these circumstances, I bethought me of my rosary or string of beads, with a cross attached to it, that was hanging uselessly round my neck. This little trinket I valued as nothing, but they almost reverenced it. I therefore showed it to the children; they kissed it reverently, crossed themselves to it, and had a good deal of other flummery, alike senseless to me. I

asked them if they wanted it; they said yes. I then asked them how much meat they would give me for it; they said as much as I would wish. I then took down some nine or ten pounds, which they readily gave me for this, to them, inestimable article. They also gave me some tortillas. I then left the house, and went to the foot of the mountain, where I built a fire, and cooked some of my meat.

The next morning I pursued my journey, and that day passed through a town, the name of which I do not remember; but it was not a large, nor do I think a very civil place. While passing along the streets, with my blanket on my shoulder, a Mexican came up to me, and desired me to go with him to the alcalde's office. This I declined doing. He then called to some one to come and help him; and they two took hold of me, one on each side, and marched me off to that functionary's. Here a large crowd was waiting for me. I was in some minutes before any questions were put to me, during which time I comprehended that I was under arrest, and the cause of it; I also knew that if they persevered in their inquiries my guilt would be manifest, at least to them; and the only way in which I could extricate myself from my dilemma was to play the fool. The first question they asked was, "Where is your passport?" I made no answer, only by an idiotic grin on those around me. "What is your name?" another grin was the reply. They kept me in the office nearly two hours, during which time I played the fool to their entire conviction. I made all sorts of noises. I would spit and drool all over myself; in short, I so completely deceived them

that they at last said, "Poor fellow! let him go," which they soon did, motioning to me to go to the door. I, however, did not take the hint, but stood gaping round, to the infinite amusement of the by-standers. At length they took me by the hand and led me to the door. I passed into the street, looked up on both sides at the houses, and would pick up a stone and throw it up in the air, then look at them and laugh. But all this while I kept moving toward the edge of the town, the crowd of gaping, wondering fools following on all the while. They followed me as far as the suburbs of the town, and then suffered me to depart. As soon as I had got out of sight, being fearful of pursuit, I struck off to the mountains, where I remained two days, as I wished by all means to avoid the road for the present. The cause of my arrest was a suspicion that I was a spy. They had heard something of a prisoner's escaping from Queretaro, but nothing sufficiently definite to hold a thorough examination relative to it. Had I been recognized at this place as an escaped prisoner, I would, without doubt, have been shot, for I was considered as under oath not to try to get away at all.

My long traveling and constant exposure had so reduced my system that I was at present hardly able to move. I was afraid that a serious sickness was about to stop my further progress, at least for a while; I therefore looked for a house in some retired place, where I might safely stop for a few days, until my strength was somewhat recruited. Two days I dragged my weary limbs along before I found a place which would answer my purpose. The house was

near the mountains, about two miles from the main road, and occupied by an old man and four children. I plainly told him of my situation, of my ill health, and utter inability to proceed on my journey, and asked his permission to remain in his house until I had recovered my health so as to be able to proceed. To this he gave his consent; and I take pleasure in saying that during the time that I stayed with him he treated me like a father. In his attentions to me he was constant and unremitting. I remained here three weeks; and this rest restored me to my usual health. I will now give some account of the appearance and productions of this part of the country.

Volcanic action appears to have been prevalent at some former period through this region, as numerous specimens of lava occur; and in some places, where vegetable matter has not accumulated above it, it appears in one solid mass along the sides of the mountains from the top to the bottom. There appeared, in one place, to be a path made smooth by the lodging of some melted substance. The surface is smooth, and varies in width from one to five rods. I was not able to go to the top and examine its appearance there; but my kind host informed me that on the top is a hollow basin going down to a great depth. This seemed to establish the fact that at some former period a volcano existed here; but, so far as I could learn, there is no historic account of it.

The country is entirely covered with chapparal; these are bushes covered with thorns, and varying in size, but seldom growing larger than a common-sized apple-tree. The wood is hard, and looks like

lignum-vitæ, being of a very firm and close grain. It is so full of oil that it makes an intensely hot fire. Throughout the chapparal occurs that sort of vegetable called *cactus*, of which there are several kinds. One species resembles the prickly pear; but here it grows to a height of fifteen or twenty feet, and branches out in all directions. On this grows a berry as large as a common-sized apple, but it is unfit for use. This fruit is called tunas (pronounced *toonas*). There is, however, another kind, that bears a great resemblance to the one above described, but differs in this, that the other has large and long thorns resembling a cambric needle, whereas the latter has none, and the fruit, when ripe, is of a pale blue, and good to eat. From this fruit they extract the juice, and when fermented it forms an excellent drink, called *colorado*. This species of cactus they frequently transplant when small, and place where they want a fence. It grows rapidly, and forms a strong and durable hedge.

There are three other kinds which are very common. One grows to a great height, sometimes thirty feet, and every year's growth is marked by a joint or notch round the entire stalk. It is generally six-angled, and covered with thorns. This also is used for fences, and will make one so tight that a bird could not fly through. Another kind much resembles the one last described in appearance, only it is smaller, triangular, and spreads over the ground instead of standing upright. Another kind, and the last I shall mention, is entirely different from any of the others, never growing over five feet high; it is large at the bottom, and rounds off at the top. The

largest does not exceed twenty inches in thickness. Near the ground it is of a deep red color; on rising higher it is a bright yellow, and as it draws to the top it fades to a very pale yellow color.

The century plant also deserves to be noticed. It grows to the height of ten feet, or rather the leaves do, for there is no body to it. The leaves, according to its length, vary in thickness from one to two inches, and are about six inches wide, gradually tapering to a point, on which is a sharp thorn. By cutting to the center of this plant, a liquid is extracted, which, when fermented, is much used as an intoxicating drink, and called *pulque*. The plant is called by the Mexicans *Mescal*. They distill it, and make from it a liquor of the same name. The leaves (or, more properly, stalks) they pound up and soak until all the fibers can be taken out, when it is dried and manufactured into ropes, for which, by its strength, it is well adapted. This plant is also used for fences.

Of the animal kingdom I could not speak, not having seen much worthy of notice. One animal, however, which I noticed, is the horned frog. It is of the size of a common frog, and very similar to it in shape and movements, but it has the additional perquisite of a horn on each side of its head. These vary in length, but they never exceed half an inch; it has a row of smaller ones on its back. There is a kind of spider called tarantula, which is larger than the common spider, and contains a deadly poison.

CHAPTER VI.

Resume my Journey. — Sorrow on bidding Adieu to my Host. — His Kindness at parting.—Road begins to Descend.—Changed Appearance of the Country.—Crops.—Salamanca.—Universal Custom.—Meet a Countryman, who renders me important Services.—Useless Bloodshed.—Advantages of a Passport.—Stage Lines.—Go Astray.—Strange Bed.—Recover the right Way.—Danger of Discovery.—Mode of raising Funds.—Guanahuato.—Poorer Classes of People.—Silver Mines. — Gambling and Drinking habits. — A Fellow-traveler.—Kindness of the People.—Appearance of the Country.—Scarcity of Water.—Robbed.—My fellow-traveler's Imprudence brings us into Danger.—Means of Living, Dwellings, and appearance of the People.—Parting Advice and Salutations.—Rich and Poor.—Peons.—Religious Exercises.—Barrens.—Fertile Spots.—Murders.—Sudden Thunder-storm.—Troubles at a Village.—The Alcalde.—Good Offices of our Host. — Green Lizards. — Wild Horses. — Mode of catching and breaking them.—Mexican Horse-gear.

Having now sufficiently recovered my health and strength, I resolved to prosecute my journey. To my kind friend I felt under many and weighty obligations. I felt that to his hospitality I owed my life; but I was so poor that I had nothing to pay. How I then wished that I had a fortune at my command, that I could pay him as he deserved. As it was, I must leave him poor as I found him. It was painful to leave this good old man. I had in a measure become attached to him, and he appeared to be so to me. When I told him of the necessity there was for my going, he urged me to stay with him. His generous heart would consider it as a favor done

to him, rather than an encumbrance, could I have accepted his kind offer.

I determined to start the next morning. He told one of his sons to get a horse and carry me some little distance. He did so, and on we started. We that day crossed the Laxa, a tributary of the St. Jago, which empties its waters into the Pacific Ocean. This sight greatly encouraged me, for I was now on the descending side, having passed the highest point of the table-land. My comrade went ten miles with me, then took his leave and returned home, bearing with him my deepest gratitude and heartfelt thanks.

The way now was mostly level; the valley was perfectly so, fertile, and highly cultivated. Corn, tobacco, and large fields of sugar-cane were growing on both sides of the road. Two crops a year is a common yield where they have industry to put them into the ground. Cotton is raised on some of the low lands to a considerable extent, though it will probably never be a staple production, owing to their ignorance in not knowing how to cultivate it properly, and their indolence in not attending to it at the proper time.

I traveled this day about thirty miles, and stopped at night at a rancho, where I was hospitably received and provided for; and the next morning I started early, being determined to reach Salamanca, distant forty miles. I now managed to live tolerably well, the inhabitants taking me for one of the San Patricio company, who had fought in defense of their country and religion. After I had got out of hearing of Queretaro, I told this story, and they believed it,

without asking me for a passport, a thing which I could not show them. Most of this day's journey was along the river which I had crossed the day before. For a few miles, the road was built up about two feet, on account of a large marsh; and on each side was a wall, plastered over with cement. About midway in this marsh were two high pillars by the road side. For what object these were built I know not.

I arrived at Salamanca after dark, and sought lodgings in the suburbs of the town, at the house of a priest. He was a fat, portly-looking person, kindness and good nature being stamped on his face. He received me with cordiality, gave me a supper, and then conversed about my country. He was quite intelligent and interesting in conversation. At eleven o'clock he permitted me to go to the bed I so much needed, for I was very tired. The next morning, after breakfast, I walked round the town in company with this priest. I found it to be a large and well-built town. Round its public square, the buildings were splendid for a Mexican town. The churches were large and spacious, and by the side of one stood a large convent. While in the square, the priest pointed to a man who was coming toward us, and said he was an American. This, to me, was news of the most gratifying kind. When we met, I spoke to him in Spanish. He looked at me a moment, and then answered in English; I excused myself to the priest, and went with my countryman. He went to his factory, which was half a mile from the town. When there, I asked him if he was an American. He said he

was. I asked what state he was from. He answered, Connecticut. "Then, sir," I replied, "as you are an American, I feel that I can ask your assistance in a matter of the utmost importance to me, and one that requires great discretion on your part." I then related enough of my history to show him the necessity of my having a passport, and asked if he could aid me in getting one. He replied that he could; that he was well acquainted with the commandante, and on terms of intimacy with him; and he readily offered to go and get me one. At his request I stayed there all day, as he could not go before the afternoon. I passed the intervening time as I best could, going round the factory, and then the town.

I will here mention a universal custom, which I forgot to notice before. Wherever a dead body has been found, there they bury it, and over it place a cross. If it is near a tree, the cross is nailed to the tree. Along the road that I came I passed numerous crosses almost daily. This gives a very correct idea of the safety, or, rather, danger of the road; for if a person is supposed to have money, he is seldom suffered to pass unmolested. But what brought this circumstance to my mind more particularly was this fact: Just below the factory, in the open field, there was a large number of these crosses, some three or four hundred. I was informed that during the war with Spain a battle had been fought at this place, in which the Mexicans were victorious, and these crosses were erected over the graves of those who were killed.

At the time appointed I went, in company with the

director of the factory, to the office of the commandante. It was represented that I that morning had lost my passport; that I was one of the San Patricio company, and had fought with honor and fidelity in favor of this country, &c., and he concluded by humbly asking for another from him to enable me to prosecute my journey. The commandante was a fat, good old soul, and looked as though he was too lazy to inquire very strictly into the truth of the matter. He inquired my name, and who gave me the passport I had lost, &c., which I readily answered. He then gave me another. With this I felt as rich as though I could command the whole of the Indies. Now I was safe; and if life and health were spared me, I knew I should again see home and friends. To my kind friend, who had rendered me this important service, I returned my warmest thanks. He said that he had been compelled to be very circumspect in his language since the war; and, even as it was, he said they had talked of arresting him on suspicion that he would convey information to the Americans. Had they reflected one moment, they must have seen that, situated as far as he was from the army, he could not have acted as a spy. But they did not arrest him; his friend the commandante saved him. Still, he said that he would do all he could to an American soldier in attempting to escape from captivity. He took me to his house, entertained me, and clothed me.

Next morning, with many hearty wishes for my safety, he bade me farewell. In addition to a suit of clothes, a pair of shoes, and a hat, he gave me

three dollars in money. In value, the whole would amount to near fifteen dollars. If I had been so fortunate as to get this passport at Queretaro, I should now have been at Guadalajara. But those men to whom I there applied were as destitute of sympathy for me as a common brute, and I verily believe would as soon have put forth a hand to the assistance of a dog. I am only sorry that I have not their names, for it would afford me as much pleasure to hold them up to deserved execration as to mention the many instances of kindness that I received, not only from my countrymen, but also at the hands of those against whom we were waging a bloody war. I say bloody, because it is an undeniable fact that the marches of our army and the occupation of many of their towns were attended with unnecessary bloodshed. In proof of this, we have only to refer to the fields of Monterey, where scores of Mexicans were slaughtered from pure revenge. At the camp near Saltillo scores were found dead, having been immolated on the altar of vengeance. That the Mexicans were the first aggressors in murdering some of our soldiers can not be denied; but it was not right to sacrifice the innocent for the crimes of the guilty. These things were published through the republic, and generated a feeling of hostility and vengeance that was hard to allay. Hence any who would desert and join the Mexican standard would be received with open arms; and the reputation of the San Patricio battalion was spread from ocean to ocean, and to that, more than any thing else, do I owe my present safety.

But to resume my narrative. I that day kept in

the road, and with a feeling of safety that I had not experienced since the time I first started. I now had my passport, and in every town I came to I could walk boldly and in open daylight to any part of it. I now could go to every alcalde, where I wished to stop, and demand of him quarters to sleep.

Here I may state that, by a recent order of government, every alcalde or commandante was required, by all means in their power, to aid and assist any of those belonging to the San Patricio company who wished to go to the Pacific—to give them quarters at night, and, if necessary, to furnish them with money, &c. This order I now took advantage of, as a matter of course; for, whenever I came to a town, I would present myself to the superior officer and show him my passport; sometimes he would countersign it, sometimes not; but he would always give me some money and an order to go to a meson (or tavern), where a room was given me. This room I could occupy so long as I stayed there, and free of charge.

After leaving Salamanca, the road was bad—down deep gulleys, and ascending others on the opposite bank. Although the stages between Mexico, Zacatecas, and Guanahuato travel this road, they never repair it; yet it might, with very little labor, be made an excellent road. These stages were built at Troy, New York, and when I saw one it strongly reminded me of home. They were projected by a Spaniard, who brought the vehicles into the country. He is now running them between Mexico and all the principal cities, and is very rapidly accumulating a handsome fortune as the fruits of his enterprise. This is

the first instance in which I have seen any thing that resembles Yankee enterprise in Mexico projected and carried into execution by a Mexican, or even a Spaniard.

That night I stopped at a small hacienda, and went to the house of the dueño, who, after examining my passport, gave me permission to remain in his house till morning. He gave me supper and breakfast, and in the morning I resumed my journey. The country was now almost entirely uninhabited and uncultivated. During that day I suffered considerably from want of water, and I passed but two houses the entire day. The next day I again lost my way, and before I found out my mistake I had traveled three days.

One night, during this period, as I could not find a house, I slept out in the open field. As I had been long accustomed to this, it made but little difference; but, having nothing for supper, the situation was far from pleasant; no corn or potatoes could be seen, nor could I perceive any birds or squirrels, as it was now near dark. As the rainy season had not yet passed, I expected to get a wetting before morning. This proved to be the case, for in the night I was awakened by some rain falling on my face. I just turned over a little, put my arm over my face to shelter it, and went to sleep again. It rained hard all night, and next morning I found that I was nearly submerged in water, as it reached half way over me. The reason of this was, that the night before I had selected a sort of hollow place to lie in because of the protection it would afford me against the wind, and

this hollow was filled with water. In the morning the sun came out clear. I got up, shook myself, and pressed on, determined, if possible, to find a house.

Toward nightfall I found one. I walked in, got something to eat, and asked leave to stay all night. They granted me my request. I told them of the mishap of the preceding night, when they said that up near the mountains, about three miles from where I was, there was a small town, but it could not be seen from the road. I inquired of them about the road that I was to take, and to my sorrow I was again informed that I must take the back track. I thanked them for their information, and went to sleep, but my slumbers were disturbed by the attacks of swarms of nameless little animals. Next morning I prepared for an early start. Before leaving, they gave me directions where to stay that night, to avoid sleeping in the open air.

At the end of three days I again came into the right road without meeting with any adventure worth relating. I then traveled on as fast as possible, as the distance to a stopping-place was twenty miles, and the day was more than half gone. Common report says that this road is infested with bands of robbers without number, and that hardly a day passes but some one is robbed, or perhaps killed. I myself saw several crosses that had evidently been put up quite lately, but I do not know that I ever saw any robbers, not having been molested by them yet. I have, however, been very much troubled at times by the sight of large bodies of cavalry, some of whom were going in the same direction that I was. My

only and greatest fear was that some officer might be with them who knew me; and in one or two instances I saw three with whom I was quite well acquainted, and who knew me as a prisoner of war; but, owing to my being in another place, a change of clothes, and their not expecting to see me, I was fortunately not recognized. This was a danger that I encountered every time I came into a town of any size; but an overruling Providence protected me.

The names of all the towns that I passed through I do not recollect, for I did not note them down, as they were small, and nothing of importance occurred; but of the larger sized I generally took down a memorandum. It was my usual practice, when I came to any town, to go to the priests, and all the merchants and wealthy men, present them my passport, and ask them to assist me on my journey; this they did cheerfully, and sometimes abundantly. In some towns I got even four or five dollars. This is the way that I supported myself since leaving Salamanca, and it was a resource that never failed me. I do not approve of the practice of begging, nor would I feel willing to acknowledge myself a beggar; but I do not now feel that I have been much disgraced by having practiced it under those circumstances; it certainly was considered as an honor by them, as they were under the impression that I was reduced to this extremity by fighting against my countrymen.

I now drew near Guanahuato or Guanaxuato. The road was rough, and in some places mountainous. About five days before reaching that city I forded a river which was wide, but so shallow that none of

my clothes were wet in fording it. The country was more mountainous than the part that I had passed through. It seemed to be a continuous chain of mountains, one piled up on another, and only here and there a patch could be found that was cultivated. I was now in the midst of the best mining region of Mexico, both of gold and of silver. Quicksilver, also, is found here, but not in sufficient quantities to pay the working of the mine.

After a few days of rough traveling I arrived at Guanahuato, and presented myself to the authorities. Good quarters were assigned me at the quartel, and the next morning I took a stroll to examine one of those opulent cities of which I had read so much. I could scarcely realize that I was in one of those places where wealth is acquired as though by magic—where fortunes are sometimes made in an hour. The entrance to the city, on the side that I came, is through a narrow pass, guarded by high mountains on one side, and a dark, impassable gulf on the other. In this pass are gates, which at night, I believe, are closed. The city itself is built on the side of a mountain; the streets which run along its length lie one above the other, each being on a level with the roofs of those houses that are built on the street below. The walls on the tops of the houses are covered with grass; and when a person is at the top, and looks below, he is astonished in not being able to see more houses. A field of grass appears to be spread out before him, and all that presents a variety is the churches, whose numerous spires rear their towering tops on high.

The Capitol is a beautiful building, large and spacious; the Mint, and, in short, all the public buildings, are more grand and imposing in appearance than in any place I had yet seen. There were some Englishmen here, a company of whom owned and worked one of the best silver mines in Mexico. I did not see any of these, nor did I wish to do so, having seen enough of them in Queretaro.

The poorer classes, I observed, were better dressed, and appeared to be more above the condition of the same class than in any other part of Mexico, probably owing to the fact that more money was in circulation, and obtained with greater facility.

The mountains here afford an inexhaustible source of wealth. Some dig only just enough to supply their wants, and with this remain content; others work their mines day and night. One mine was shown me which was discovered in the following singular manner. A poor peasant was going over the mountain one day on foot. Night overtook him before he was half way down, and he built a fire, and collected some brush to keep it going all night. He then lay down, wrapped in his blanket, and went to sleep. In the morning, when he awoke, his fire was gone out; the wind had blown away the ashes, and the vegetable matter that had accumulated above the rocks had burned clean off. The heat of the fire had been so great that the rock had become calcined, and separated from the rich metal it contained. The poor peasant then discovered the source of his present wealth. He was not able to erect mills to grind the stone, but he commenced by digging and selling the

stone at so much the aroba, about twenty-five pounds. He continued this until he was able to build mills and work his mine to advantage. He is now one of the richest men of Guanahuato, and his property is counted by millions. This is not a solitary instance; others, equally striking, were related to me.

Where so much money is in circulation, gambling and drinking (those curses of Mexico) are practiced to great excess. The passion for gambling pervades all classes of society; men, women, and even children are victims to this ruinous vice. I have seen little children, who could barely talk plain, take their claco or quartilla (three cents), run to their mothers, hold it up to them, and lisp *monte!* The wealthier classes I have seen staking their thousands, and losing them with as much apparent indifference as though it was a hair from their head, or a button from their vest. I was told that one man in this city staked and lost one hundred thousand in one game; but I shall say more on this subject hereafter.

I had been here three days, when I made preparations for a start. On the following morning I found that, in coming to this place, I had gone out of my way about five days' journey. I had all the time supposed that it was in my route direct to Guadalajara, but here I found out that I was mistaken; I took the wrong road at the place where I forded the river. But I was well paid in coming here, both in money, clothes, &c., and also in the new and interesting objects that I saw.

While at Guanahuato I accidentally came across one of the San Patricio company, who had been here

some months. He determined to go to Guadalajara in my company, and thence to the Pacific. His name was James Mahon, an Irishman; and a more disagreeable person could hardly be found. He was eternally drinking and fighting, and would frequently quarrel with the Mexicans, a course which often endangered our lives. This I did not know until after we had traveled together several days. The chief reason why I consented to go with him was because of the loneliness I often experienced in traveling alone through a country for the most part thinly inhabited. I was further induced to this step by the representations of the dangers of the way. It was said that the inhabitants in some small villages were very hostile to foreigners, and in two instances had attacked and killed some few of this same San Patricio company. If this was so, two, I thought, were better than one, and both would stand a better chance of escape should an attack be made.

The morning we left Guanahuato we made an early start, and traversed the route which I had previously come. This we did with considerable comfort and ease, for the inhabitants showed us all the kindness in their power. Being acquainted with me, our food and lodging cost us nothing; and they seemed to vie with each other to see who should do the most for us. They would frequently put us on their horses and carry us a few miles, so that this part of the journey was the most pleasant of the whole route. This continued on their part as far as the river, which I must again cross to get into the road which I was to take. After this the people were all strangers, or,

rather, they had never seen me before; we therefore did not expect the same kindness and hospitality that we had received while coming from Guanahuato. Still, we were not as yet molested, but we were constantly drawing nearer those places where it was represented that an unfriendly feeling existed.

The country was rough, rocky, and barren. Sometimes we traveled whole days without seeing a house, during which time we were often pressed for want of water, and none could be had; but we occasionally found a mud hole with a little thick, muddy water in it. This we drank with avidity, and thought ourselves lucky in finding even this.

One day, while on one of these gloomy routes, we met five men on foot. They passed us, and then wheeled round and seized us both by our arms. They bound us fast, searched our pockets, and took all the money we had, amounting to near five dollars, our blankets, and what clothes we did not have on. They then left us without as much as thanking us, and also without untying us. We waited a few moments until they were out of sight, and then set to work to free ourselves, which we finally did, and jogged on our way. How much lighter a man feels after having been robbed, even if it is but little that he has to lose. We certainly did; we breathed freer, and were certainly lighter by some ten or fifteen pounds a piece; but we were glad to come off so well. During the operation not a word was said; they had us perfectly secure, and they knew it. As they had arms, and we none, no resistance could be successfully made.

We traveled on a little faster than before, anxious to increase the distance between us and our late acquaintances. That night we came to a small village, which was merely a collection of huts. The inhabitants were a villainous-looking set of rascals, and we did not like to stay there; but, as it was some miles to another village, we concluded to brave the danger, and not try to avoid it by skulking in the fields. In the course of the evening, some men came to the house where we stopped for the night, and offered us liquor to drink. We accepted it, and drank some. My comrade drank heartily, and continued drinking until he was beastly drunk, notwithstanding the many cautions that I gave him. He only abused me, the Mexicans, and the whole nation. His language finally excited their anger, and they became roused to such a degree that I every moment expected them to fall on us, and perhaps kill us. There was one in the crowd who appeared to have some control over the rest. To him I appealed, showed him my passport, told him of my having fought in favor of his country in the battles of Buena Vista, and those near Mexico, &c., and I begged him to overlook and pass by the abuse of my drunken comrade. After some other conversation, in which I gained his confidence, he said that we should be protected; and he then ordered his associates to leave, and not molest us any more.

This place, I afterward learned, was the rendezvous of robbers; and there is no doubt that the robbers whom we had met lived in this same village, which may possibly have been the place where those

murders were committed which I have related on a preceding page.

The country through which we were now passing was rough and even mountainous. For several days we did not see a field under cultivation; and it was a rare case that we saw over two or three houses in a whole day's travel. How those few inhabitants managed to live was a mystery, unless it was by plunder. This was most probably the case; for, according to an old saying, a person that wont work must steal, and here work could not be had, because there was none to be done. Their houses deserve a description. They are simply poles stuck in the ground close together, the cracks between them being filled up with pieces of timber. The roof is thatched with straw, and sometimes covered with bark. The door is made by splitting some timbers in two, which are then fastened to a cross-piece with thongs, and set up in the door-way. They build their fire for cooking in the center of the room, and never have a fire unless for cooking purposes. The inmates are a wretched-looking people, as ragged as they can well be, and the most miserable and squalid of any human beings that I ever saw. This, thought I, is poverty. The floors of these houses are nothing but the earth trodden down hard. This also forms their bed; and I can say from experience that it makes a hard one.

That these people must sometimes starve, or, what is nearly as bad, almost starve, is, I think, from the nature of their circumstances, unavoidable. In some places in this part of the country the almost universal musquit bush does not grow, and, consequently,

the ordinary supply of wood is cut off. To remedy this great want, cattle dung is gathered and dried. This makes a very hot fire; and victuals cooked with this kind of fuel do not need as much seasoning as though cooked with wood; but its flavor is not quite so good. I have seen them burning lime with this article, which shows conclusively that it produces an intense heat.

Next morning we prepared for an early start. We paid our respects to the man who so kindly protected us the evening before. He gave my comrade a good piece of advice, hereafter to regulate his tongue so that it should no more abuse those whose hospitality gave us shelter; and he then stated that, but for his interference, we should both of us have been killed. This rather astonished my comrade, who was not aware of having been more than *gentlemanly* drunk. We, however, begged a thousand pardons for having unwittingly insulted them. We then started on our journey, amid the shouts and jeers of an ignorant and brutal rabble. Their principal shout was, "*The gringoes are gone: hurrah!*" This word *gringo*, is a corruption of *green-horn*, and is supposed by the Mexicans to be the most opprobrious epithet the English language affords, and equal to the word *chivo* with them, which means a he-goat. You may call a Mexican by any term of reproach but this; use *chivo* even to a common beggar, and you will put him in a most furious and ungovernable rage.

It is utterly impossible for any one who has not seen it to imagine the difference which exists between the rich and the poor in this wretched country.

The rich, who rule every thing—even the minds of the poor—are generally most debased, morally; and they are, consequently, cruel masters. They have the power to punish to almost any extent, even death, and are served with the most abject deference by their peons or slaves. As slavery is not recognized, the word servants, perhaps, would be more proper. But, in effect, they are in a state worse than slavery. They are mostly bound to their masters for some debt, which the latter take care shall never be paid. They appear to have neither mind nor hope above their present condition, and will continue to work on from day to day, and from year to year, without receiving more than enough to keep soul and body together. When addressing their masters, they take off their hats, and speak in a hesitating and trembling manner, as though they were in the presence of a superior Being. There is nothing they will not do for money, even to the selling of their wives and daughters for a time. Instances of this kind are not rare, and have been related to me by indisputable authority.

The religious feeling which pervades all classes, young and old, is remarkable. Never do they pass a church without uncovering their heads, and turning their faces thitherward; and at the sound of the bell for vespers, every hat is removed, and all stand uncovered wherever they are, repeating a sort of prayer, in which all join until the sound is over, when each one resumes whatever occupation he might have been engaged in when interrupted. In some of their large towns and cities, where I have been on a Sunday, I have seen their plazas or squares filled with people.

There were perhaps thousands, all attending to buying and selling, with all the energy and activity they are master of; but when, at the closing of the services in the Cathedral, the large bell tolls, then all in the square kneel, facing the church, and at every stroke of the bell they will thump on their breasts with their closed hands. This is done simultaneously by all; and in so large a concourse of people, its sound very much resembles distant thunder. At the same time, all are praying, producing sounds not unlike the humming of bees. Of this, more hereafter.

We that day traveled through a country very much resembling what we had passed for the last five days; not a particle of land was cultivated but that on the banks of rivers or streams; and, except in such spots, it is of the most barren description, being principally composed of a hard, yellow clay, so poor that in many localities grass will not grow. I have traveled more than a hundred miles at a time without seeing sufficient grass to furnish one good meal for a horse, or a stone as large as a pebble. The road, except in a few places where it crosses gulleys and mountains, is excellent, being hard, and as level as a floor. On the banks of the streams the fertility of the soil is such as amply to repay the farmer, and the crops seem never to exhaust the ground. I have seen pieces that have been worked more than fifty years, with sometimes two crops a year, and yet the soil does not seem to be exhausted, and all this without spreading on it a particle of manure. Were the Mexicans not so excessively lazy, they might produce any thing they chose, and in any quantity; but

when the seed is put in the ground, they think they have done enough. If it should not come up, or the plant not thrive, they call on the Virgin Mary, or fall on their knees before their priest at the altar, tell him how unfortunate they are, buy a blessing, and go home with glorious expectations.

Our journey to-day was extremely rough, climbing hills and mountains, and then descending them. We passed a spot where three crosses were placed beside the road. From the date, it was evident that the murders were committed quite lately, and, from the inscription on them, it was certain that men of wealth had been murdered. It was in a deep ravine, between two hills, in a place completely darkened by the overhanging bushes, so that it was a very fit locality to commit such crimes. A little further two more were seen, making five in all. Our fears were now a little excited lest there might be a necessity to erect crosses over our bodies also, as, from the scarcity of houses and travelers, every facility was afforded to commit deeds of violence with impunity. However, we got along safe.

Soon after, we came to huge mountains, across which our road lay. This laborious task had well-nigh forced us to give out, as we were greatly fatigued by the journey we had already performed that day. But we pushed ahead, as there was no stopping-place within a distance of nearly fifteen miles, and the sun had already passed the meridian.

We here witnessed one of those strange phenomena that are so common among the mountains of this country. We had got into a deep valley; high mount-

ains encompassed us on all sides; we were sitting by the side of a stream, resting for a moment, when we observed a cloud, not large nor black, passing swiftly by. It was rapidly followed by another, and another, and yet another, each blacker than the one that preceded it. In an incredibly short space of time the heavens were blacker than Egyptian darkness; the clouds seemed to be too heavy to float in the air, and rested on the tops of the mountains. The scene was more than grand—it was frightful. Soon a flash of lightning was seen; others followed, clothed with more terrific brilliancy; all these came in rapid succession: thunder, long, loud, and heavy, seeming to make the earth tremble, came peal on peal, in quick succession, with a noise as though heaven and earth were coming together with a mighty crash. On the tops of the mountains it seemed to rain hard, but down where we were only a few large drops fell. This lasted probably twenty minutes, when the storm blew over, and we again proceeded on our journey.

That night we reached a small town by the name of Calais. It was after dark when we arrived there. As soon as we were discovered to be foreigners, a crowd collected around us and called out *gringoes! gringoes!* We went to the alcalde, presented our passports, and requested quarters for the night; he coolly read them, and then said that if we had any money, we could no doubt get lodgings; if we had none, he could not help us. The gaping rabble had followed us thither, and stood around the door as though in breathless anxiety to hear what this old worthy would say; and when he had given his de-

cision, they seemed to relish it mightily, for they immediately gave three cheers, crying out, "*Carrajo los gringoes!*" This was followed up and repeated so often that it at length excited our anger, and to such a degree that we thought it best to check it at once. I then turned to them, and addressed them nearly to this effect: that we were going to the Pacific, were running away from the Americans, and that hitherto, without any exception, we had been well treated by the inhabitants of that country, and I was sorry to say that this was the first place where we had experienced any ill treatment. I now desired them, once for all, to understand that we would not endure any more of their abuse; that we were capable of protecting ourselves, and should do it, at whatever hazard.

These remarks quieted a few, but made others more tumultuous. They now commenced throwing stones at us, some of which hit and hurt us. As we were both armed with good heavy clubs, we went among them. Those that had thrown the stones we had marked, and we knocked them down, the rest remaining quiet. At this moment the alcalde came out and inquired what the matter was; all were eager to tell, and no chance was given us to speak. At length the alcalde told us to follow him to his office. We did so. When there, he examined us separately. We could not satisfy him, however, that we told the truth, and he began to say something about a carcel or jail. We asked him if he intended to put us in jail. He said he must, for riotous conduct. Our tempers had not yet got so smoothed down that we

could bear any indignity without expressing some little demur; and as I could best talk with him, I now rose. As we were in the office alone, and the doors fastened within, I had no fears of interference from without. I said in a bold, defiant tone, that as for going to jail, if he was determined on it, I and my comrade would go; "But mark you, Mr. Alcalde," said I, "there is, one day's journey behind, twenty men of this same San Patricio company. To-morrow night they will be here, and if I am in jail they will tear it down and free us; and as they are well armed, they will massacre you and all who make any resistance. Now, then, take us to the jail, if you dare."

This address had the desired effect. A coward I suspected him to be from the first, and a coward he now proved himself. He was at first in fear of the rabble, who commenced hooting at us as soon as we entered the village, and he was afraid of showing us that protection which, as a public officer, he was bound to do. He now said that he had no wish to molest us or cause us any inconvenience; that he would give us quarters for the night, and in the morning we might depart, as soon as we pleased, unmolested.

We then asked him to go to a meson or tavern with us, assign us our rooms, give us the keys, and leave orders that no one should give us any more trouble. To this he readily consented. When we went out of his office, the rabble was still standing around there, and these he ordered off. When we got to the tavern, he gave us our supper, showed us our room, gave us the keys, and ordered all the gates

shut, and not to be opened until we wished to go in the morning.

All was done according to the alcalde's orders, and we found ourselves much more comfortable than the proceedings attending our entrance into the town promised. The landlord we found to be a quiet, inoffensive sort of a man, and we conversed with him for some time on the events of the evening. He stated that this town was some distance from any other, and was the head-quarters of some bands of robbers. Then, speaking in a low whisper, he said that the alcalde always received a part of the plunder, and that he sometimes even headed an expedition. When he told this, I asked, with some astonishment, why the government did not take it in hand, and put a quietus on these proceedings. At this he shook his head, and replied, "*No hay fuerza en el gobierno*" (there is no force in the government). I then asked him if it was safe for us to travel in the morning alone. He said that the alcalde's myrmidons might possibly give us trouble, but that the alcalde himself would not; the threat of my coming comrades would restrain him from taking any action against us personally. I asked if there was any other way to get off in the morning than to take the main road. He said there was; that by following up close to the mountain, a foot-path led, by a circuitous route of some miles, into the main road. He also advised me to go along before daylight, so as not to be seen by any of the people, as their excitement knew no bounds when not restrained by absolute force.

This man so won on my confidence that I determ-

ined to follow his advice; and, as it was late, I started to go to my room, first requesting him to awaken us by two o'clock in the morning, which he consented to do. We found in the room given us an espoda, or short sword. This I determined to carry with me, and, if occasion required, use it hereafter instead of my cane. We threw ourselves on the mat, and in an instant we were sound asleep.

It seemed as though we had been asleep but a few moments before a loud thumping and rattling at the door awakened us. I inquired who was there. The friendly voice of our landlord answered that it was already two o'clock. We then got up, and prepared for a start. He first gave us a breakfast, for which he refused pay; then, as silently as possible, he let us out of the corral or yard. He followed us, and volunteered his services in showing us which way to take, and accompanied us some three or four miles. He then left us to go back, advising us to keep out of the main road for ten or fifteen miles, after which we might again take it, and also to travel as fast as we could. As this advice seemed good, we resolved to follow it to the very letter.

The path we were now taking was nearer and much rougher; but we jogged on, anxious to make the distance between us and the place we had left as great as possible, and in the shortest space of time passed two small villages, leaving them some way to the right on the main road. It was evident that our friend wished us to avoid these. After passing the second one, we might safely take the road again.

We saw on this mountain journey some armadil-

loes, the first I had ever seen; but as these animals have been so often described, I will say no more of them. Innumerable swarms of lizards covered the ground in this region; they were of a greenish color. They leaped out of our way in such large numbers that they looked more like a body of green grass than a collection of animals. I had frequently seen this species before, but not in such swarms.

The number of wild horses was another matter of curiosity. Large droves of them were feeding around us; they were of the mustang species, small in stature, but with frames firm and well built. All their movements were most graceful, showing their splendid forms to the best advantage. There was one among them that struck my fancy more than the rest: he was of a dark cream color, and of quite a large stature. When he first saw me, he looked a moment, gave a snort, ran a short distance, then stopped and looked again. I thought to myself how I would like to have a lasso around his neck, and a saddle on his back.

The Mexicans catch these mustangs, and break them to the saddle with great facility. It is done in this manner. The lasso is put over his head, the end being fixed with a noose. They then let him bound to the extent of the rope—about fifteen or more feet —when a skillful pull throws the horse upon his back. This is repeated, until the horse evidently understands that he is not at liberty, when resistance generally ceases. The man then gathers up his rope, and, with a light bound, vaults on his bare back. He then uses the rope as a bridle, and urges him on with whip and

voice until he is fairly wearied out. Then the animal is saddled and bridled, and he is again urged forward. One day is sufficient to break even the most stubborn mustang.

These ponies are used only for riding, being too small to work to any advantage. They are never over eleven or twelve hands high; and although well made, they are not capable of attaining great speed, although they have considerable wind. They are full of action, and capable of enduring great hunger and thirst. The Mexican saddle is large and heavy; the wood-work is massive, and the amount of leather is enormous. The stirrups are large, and made of wood; a large housing lies behind on the haunches, entirely covering them. If it is of leather, it is generally ornamented with silver, but it is sometimes covered with bear skin. The Mexicans always arm their heels with a huge pair of heavy, blunt spurs, with which they are constantly goading the animal's side. I have seen spurs the rowels of which were six inches in diameter, and the shank in proportion; and attached to this shank were little bits of steel, which the motion of the foot caused to jingle like so many small bells. But the bit is still more cruel. The part that goes into the mouth turns up in the form of a link in a chain; in the upper end of this is fastened a large ring, which goes round the under jaw, so that a sudden jerk is very liable to break it short off. And when the animal is under any speed, reining short up will throw him back on his haunches. This often destroys the horse's mouth, as the heavy saddle and accouterments spoil the back.

I have seen saddles and bridles that cost eight hundred dollars. A part of the seat, pommel, and stirrups was solid silver; but from ten tc seventy-five dollars is a common price.

CHAPTER VII.

Patatlan. — Daring Scheme. — Career of Ciriacco Gomez. — Escape from his Proposal.—Departure from Patatlan at Midnight.—Arrive at Leon. — Incidents there. — Suspicions of the Commandante.— How removed. — Raising the Wind. — Rescued from Danger by a Priest. — Description of Leon.—Donkeys.—Mules.—Gloomy Prospects. — Nocturnal Alarm.—Road to Lagos.—The Mail. — Elysian Scene.—Arrive at Lagos.—A dangerous Acquaintance.—Unexpected Generosity.—Fruits.—Beating the Rounds.

We pursued our way near the mountains until we were past the second ranch, when we took the main road. Being now beyond all danger from the alcalde of Calais, we jogged on until after dark, when we reached a place called Patatlan.

We here related the incidents of our journey of the two previous days, and showed our passports. On telling of our destitution, a private gentleman generously offered us a supper, lodging, and breakfast. On his hospitality, therefore, we trespassed for the night. Our new-found friend conversed with us until late at night; and we related to him the reception we had met with on the preceding night at Calais, as well as the dangers of the day before. In reply, he said that the road through which we had passed was indeed very dangerous, but not more so than a portion of the country through which we were yet to go. He said that the government was then so utterly destitute of the means to disperse these bandits, that

they had organized in large bands in every section of the country, and were daily committing their depredations on quiet and unoffending citizens with impunity. Even officers of the government were sometimes found to be in league with them. In proof of this, he related the following incident:

About two years before, a detachment of troops attacked and routed a band of these robbers, taking many of them prisoners. They marched them to the nearest village, to put them in the carcel or jail. On arriving there, the commanding officer inquired for the alcalde: he, however, was not to be found. After a while a man stepped up, and, pointing to one of the prisoners, said, there was the alcalde. Such proved to be the fact: and he was taken, together with his comrades, to the capital, tried, and executed. Our host further remarked that he had no doubt whatever but that the alcalde of Calais was also connected with robbers.

About ten o'clock at night, the usual hour for supper with the Mexicans, a hearty one was brought us; and a good bed was then furnished us, on which we passed a comfortable night.

The next morning our kind host urged us to stay and rest all that day, so as to travel on the following morning with renewed vigor. This we consented to do, the more readily as we were in hopes of finding some travelers who were going the same route. After breakfast he accompanied us round the town, asking his friends to assist us either with money, clothes, or provisions. He represented to them the ill luck that had befallen us on the road. We were consequently

well provided with money, and furnished with some clothes, and a blanket was given to each of us.

During the day I saw a man who formerly had been a soldier in the Mexican army, and was in the hospital at San Juan a part of the time that I was there, and who well knew me. His name was Ciriacco Gomez. I was struck dumb with alarm when first I saw him. He recognized me at the same time I did him; and my doom, I now thought, was sealed. He, however, came up to me, and cordially shook me by the hand. He then stated to the by-standers that he knew me well, that I was a good soldier, and deserved their greatest sympathy. This course was mysterious to me, the more so as I expected to have been betrayed by him. Some scheme most evidently was in his head, in which he wished me to join. This was the only way in which I could solve the problem.

After a while he asked me to go to his house with him; this I accordingly did. When there, he placed before me some brandy, and urged me to drink. In a few moments he inquired where I was going. I replied to Guadalajara. He asked if I had got a passport. I replied I had. He then asked how I had got away from San Juan del Rio, where he first became acquainted with me; also, what was my object in going away, &c., &c. To all these questions I gave such answers as I thought best. "Now," says he, "I well know that your object is to get to some sea-port, and go on board some American vessel." Thinking it was perfectly useless to deny what were my real intentions any longer, I candidly acknowledged that, as the Mexican government refused

to give me up when an exchange was made, I was therefore determined to liberate myself by going to the Pacific Ocean and taking refuge on board an American man-of-war. I then appealed to his honor as a man not to betray me. He asked me if I was willing to save myself, and make myself and comrade rich and independent for life. "Now," thought I, "the secret is oozing out." He then said that he had an enterprise on foot, which if I and my comrade would join, he would take a solemn oath not to betray me, but afford every possible facility in effecting my escape to the Pacific. It was, he said, a short enterprise, but attended with great danger; yet, with his plan of operations, he thought it must be attended with complete success.

From the character of the man, I knew he contemplated some desperate attempt. He had been long in the army, was all through the wars with Texas, was present at the massacres of Goliad and the Alamo, and had long sustained the character of a reckless dare-devil. He himself had related his adventures to me while we were together in the hospital. After a few moments' silence, he proceeded to detail the nature of the business in which he wished me to engage. It appears that it is usual to transport from Guadalajara to the city of Mexico all the specie that has been coined at the former place. This is done also from the other mining districts. It is sent generally at the end of every three months, and frequently amounts to a million of dollars, or even more. It is packed on mules, and sent in charge of a strong escort, amounting to a hundred or a hundred and

fifty men. Gomez had conceived the project of capturing one of these *conductas*, as they are called. He had spies employed in the capital, from whom he received notice that one was expected to start in about a week from that time, and in two weeks would be where we then were, in charge of a colonel and one hundred men. This he had resolved to take, and he wanted about one hundred and fifty men, nearly all of whom he had already engaged. He offered me and my comrade a command if we would join in the scheme.

The place of attack he fully described, so that I recognized it as I passed through it the next day. It was a narrow and deep ravine, thickly lined with chapparal bushes on each side, and some twenty rods in extent. His company was to be divided into three divisions. One was to lie in ambush at each end, and the third, commanded by himself, was to occupy the bushes in the ravine. When the conducta had fairly entered, a signal was to be given and a charge made. The divisions occupying the entrances were to advance and prevent any from making their escape. The escort being thus hemmed in on all sides, success must have been certain.

After he had detailed all his plans to me, I requested time to consider the matter, to consult my comrade, &c., and agreed to meet him the next night, when a full and explicit answer should be given. I also stipulated that we should better not meet or be seen together during the next day. To this he agreed, and we then separated, not, however, till he had forced me to take another drink of his brandy.

I went back to the house of my kind host, where I found my comrade already awaiting me with considerable anxiety, and, strange to say, perfectly sober. To him I related the nature of the conversation I had had with Ciriacco Gomez on his promise of secrecy. I then told him I was an escaped prisoner, and that I had been recognized as such by that man. We determined not to join him, at all events, but to escape out of town as speedily as possible. I looked out into the streets, and on the corner I saw the man I now most dreaded. He appeared to be on the watch, and I concluded it was of course for me. I did not appear to be confused nor any way disconcerted, although my situation was now a most trying one. Should he denounce me to the authorities, death, certain and inevitable, would be my doom. I, however, boldly walked up to him, made some commonplace remark, and passed on.

As I had till the next night to give an answer, I was in hopes of making my escape. As it was now near night, I resolved to discover, if possible, some mode of getting away unperceived, should I happen to be watched. I then returned to the house where we stayed, and went into the yard to see if it communicated with any other streets. Unfortunately, it did not. We then got on the top of the wall and saw another garden, and beyond a yard which led to one of the back streets. This was just what we wanted, and our plan was then quickly formed. This was to be our place of egress after dark. We then informed our host that it was necessary for us to leave that night. He urged for an explanation why we

must needs travel in the night. This we could not give; but, seeing that our anxiety was great, he no longer hesitated, and kindly gave his consent. We then told him the way that we should go, and asked him, as a great favor to us, to keep our departure entirely still, at least during the next day. This he readily promised. We also asked him to say, should he be questioned relative to our departure and route, that we had gone over the mountains, there being another road that led to Guadalajara. By this means I was in hopes of so completely deceiving the man that he would not obtain any clew as to where I was until I was entirely out of his reach.

Between eleven and twelve o'clock at night all became still, and our good and kind friend led us into the back yard. We then scaled the wall, and jumped down into the garden on the opposite side. From that we went into another yard, and thence into the highway. Our friend conducted us through the town, put us on the road that we were to travel, bade us good-by, and returned. I would here remark that the sword which I found in the meson at Calais I had succeeded in bringing with me without detection. This was my only hope should I be molested in my flight. As we had had a good rest, we traveled on as fast as possible. The cool weather, and being somewhat excited with fear, caused us to make good headway, and with but little fatigue. We determined, should we have it in our power, to give warning to the commanding officer of this conducta of the threatened danger.

I will now relate a part of the adventures of Ciri-

acco Gomez, as he himself told them to me when in the hospital of San Juan del Rio. He was born in the State of Durango. His parents, though not wealthy, were in comfortable circumstances. They gave him as good an education as that part of the country afforded; but he was of such a heedless and reckless disposition that he was always in some difficulty. When about the age of sixteen he killed one of his father's peons, in consequence of which act he was forced to fly from home. At that time the war between Mexico and Texas was raging with extreme ferocity and vindictiveness. "Here was a field," he remarked, his eyes shining like two balls of fire, "in which my love of daring adventure could be gratified to the full." He at once enlisted in the cavalry, and forthwith marched for Texas.

By his address, dexterity, and daring courage, he soon attracted the notice of his general, by whom he was frequently employed as a scout. His manner of proceeding on these expeditions is worth relating. He used, he said, to mount his horse after sunset, and ride very cautiously toward the Texan lines, but not near enough to be discovered. As soon as it was dark, he would gradually approach nearer, and then creep on the side of his horse, by putting his knee in the stirrup leather, and letting his horse feed round just as he chose. In this position he would remain until he had ascertained all that he wished in regard to the force, position, &c., of the enemy. He would then move to another point, and repeat the same process. Thus he always obtained exact information relative to the force and disposition of the Texan army.

On one of these occasions, however, he came very near losing his life. He had approached rather too near the enemy's lines; some motion was made by the horse which caused some of his accouterments to rattle. This excited the attention of the sentry, who was not more than thirty feet from him. It was a dark night, but yet the horse could be seen, although, as it was only a horse, it was not challenged by the sentry. When this noise was heard, however, his suspicions were aroused. The sergeant of the guard was called; he came, looked at the horse, and, suspecting that something was wrong, fired into him. The animal bounded, ran a short distance, and fell dead. Gomez then left him, and ran with all his speed; but he was pursued, and fired at several times. He finally escaped, however, and unhurt.

He was now promoted to a lieutenancy, and permitted to take the separate and independent command of about fifty men, whose duty it was to hover around the lines of the enemy, and do them what damage they could, and also to give information relative to any of their movements. When acting in this capacity, he said that he never took any prisoners, but always killed every one who might chance to fall into his hands. "In short," said he, "it was a war of extermination."

At length he had a quarrel with his commander, and, in his anger, struck him. He was then tried by a court-martial, cashiered, and again put in the ranks. He was afterward at the battle of the Alamo, and took an active part in that horrible massacre; he also shared in that horrid affray where the noble Fan-

ning and his brave companions were brutally murdered after they had surrendered, and after the Mexican commander had passed his word of honor that they should not only be saved, but protected from any ill usage. He was also with Ampudia when he invested Mier, then held by the brave General Green. Having been so severely wounded that he was unable to continue any longer in the army, he was left at San Juan in the hospital. He was wounded between Vera Cruz and Mexico in a fight with the Americans.

While in the army, Gomez had traversed the entire length and breadth of Mexico. In proof of some of his remarks, he showed me one day numerous scars that he had received in the several engagements in which he had taken part. I frequently asked him if he thought it was honorable to conduct a war in the brutal and savage manner which his countrymen had pursued in Texas. He replied that all was fair in war; that any means by which a general could secure ultimate victory was the proper course for him to pursue; and if these bloody massacres would be productive of ultimate benefit, the commander was excusable to order them.

Our road was to-day most of the way level, and we traveled on without any interruption. We met occasionally a ranchero, who would look quite cross at us, and then pass on. About ten in the morning we came to the ravine already spoken of as the place where the contemplated robbery was to take place. It was, indeed, an admirable location for such a deed. It was my intention, if we met this escort, to warn the officer of this place, and the intended attack; but,

unfortunately, I never met him, nor do I now know any thing further of this enterprise. With regard to this man's motives for trying to enlist me with him in this scheme, I can only say the probable reason was, that, knowing the character of the Americans to be bold and daring, he thought our example at the head of his band would be attended with the most happy consequences. He also most likely thought, as he well knew my situation, that, should he threaten to expose me, I would rather join him than be denounced, tied to a stake, and shot. He little understood the workings of my mind, however; for, at the very moment of his making this proposal, I was revolving in my mind the chances for escape; and after he had revealed to me his future intentions, I no longer stood in the same fear that I previously did, for I could as easily prove him a robber as he could prove me an escaped prisoner. I, however, did fear that he would discover I had gone before the time I had promised to meet him should arrive, and that he would send some of his men either to kill me and my companion, or to bring us safely back; but we arrived safe at Leon about three in the afternoon.

When we first entered the town a gentleman met us, of whom we inquired the way to the office of the commandante. He directed us to follow him. We did so, and he conversed with us on the way relative to our journey, &c. At length he stopped at a large and splendid house, and knocked for admittance. The door was soon opened by the porter. On entering, we were directed to take a seat in the corridor while he went to speak to the commandante. In a

few moments he returned, accompanied by that officer. We showed him our passports; he simply read them, and then, without countersigning, returned them. They then bid us follow them; for what purpose they did this I can not say. We went, however, and they took us down to the lower end of the city; they there entered a large and well-built house, and directed us to take seats just on the outside of the door leading to the main room. Within this room a large company of gentlemen had collected, and, from the noise that was made, they appeared to be enjoying themselves very freely. Now we would hear a Champagne bottle break; tumblers would be thrown about, and then all hands would join in singing songs. In the mean time a cup of good coffee had been served up to us, which, in our wearied state, was very acceptable.

From the time of our first sitting down there we saw a gentleman standing in the door, apparently listening to what we had to say. It occurred to me at once that this man understood English, and was taking this means to find out whether or not we were what we represented ourselves to be, and this evidently was the object in bringing us here. We at once regulated our conversation accordingly. It will be remembered that I always represented myself as an Irishman, for that people at that time stood higher in the estimation of the Mexicans than any other nation. The principal reason was that the Irish were known to be mostly Roman Catholics, and oppressed by a Protestant government; this excited all their sympathies in favor of the poor Irish. Another rea-

son was, a report that a large British force was coming to assist the Mexicans, and was then lying at Havana. This report had become almost universal in this section of the country; and they frequently told me, with great confidence and glee, how they would drive the Americans from their soil as soon as the British army should make a landing, which would be at no distant day. These reports I had little confidence in, yet policy induced me to acquiesce in all they said.

As soon as I discovered this man listening at the door, we commenced talking about "swate Ireland," our anxiety to get to Tepic, where was a British consul, &c.; then we turned the conversation on the expected invasion of the British army. We had conversed on this subject some time, when he for whose benefit we were rehearsing this story came out and began to talk with us. He asked us all manner of questions relative to the American forces, their movements, &c., and then asked if General Scott was aware of the British coming to the aid of the Mexicans. I told him that if it indeed was a fact, he could not be ignorant of it. He then asked what course Scott would pursue. I replied that he would hold all the places he then occupied until forced to leave them, and that, from the character of the man, I thought he would fight every inch of the ground before he would abandon it.

I do not now recollect all he said, but he had quite a long conversation with us. Soon after he went in, the two gentlemen who conducted us thither came out, and went with us to the commandante's house;

thence they sent us to a meson where we could stay all night. The landlord gave us a good room, and a nice mat to sleep on, and seemed to take great pleasure in making us comfortable.

By this time both my comrade and myself were out of shoes and clothing. I, however, was better off than he was, for I had some pieces of leather to tie on my feet; but he, poor fellow, was just about barefoot, and his feet were now so very sore that he was almost entirely disabled from walking. I therefore determined to make some extra exertions to procure him a pair. I then started to go round the city and raise some money. I went into all the houses of the priests, showed them my passport, and they, be it said to their honor, gave with a liberal hand. From them I went to the merchants, and so successful was I, that in two hours' time I had raised some three dollars. I then went back to the meson with a pair of shoes.

On my arrival there, I saw two men apparently having high words about something; I soon found it was about us. One had said that we were spies, and should have been hanged as such long before this. The other defended us. Finally they came to blows; knives were drawn, and the affray might have terminated fatally to one or the other, had not the landlord at this moment entered and drove them both out of the yard. This scene alarmed me not a little, for I had good reason to think that if the common people felt unfriendly toward us, our lives were in great danger. I, however, thought best to be on my guard, and not betray any symptoms of fear or distrust. This course subsequently proved to be the best; for

in the evening, as I was going through the Plaza, a mob collected round me, and began to throw dirt and stones, crying, "Curse the Yankees." I paid no attention to them, but, seeing a priest a short distance from me, I went up to him and begged his protection. He at once knew me, having seen me before that day. He turned to the crowd that was following, and ordered them to be gone, at the same time addressing them in language stronger perhaps than became a man whose business it was to stand between fallen man and his Maker. But it had a good effect on his hearers, for they at once ceased their abuse and insults, and sneaked off about their business. My kind protector then invited me to his house, and gave me a cup of chocolate. He then asked what money I had, and also how much clothing, &c. By way of answer, I showed him my shoes; and as my shirt showed nothing of its former shape or color, he noticed that also. At the same time, he seemed anxious to make me forget the unpleasant adventure that I had met with in the streets. He then sent for a pair of shoes, and left me a moment. He soon returned with a shirt and a coat, and his servant brought in my shoes. This supply furnished me tolerably well, and I soon took my leave. To secure me from further abuse, the priest sent with me his servant as a guard and guide, and we soon reached the meson, where my comrade was anxiously awaiting my arrival. He had heard of this rabble in the Plaza, and, being of a timorous disposition, he concluded, as I did not return at once, that I had been killed.

I must here remark, that the conduct of this priest

was not an exception, or different from that of his class; they were all uniformly generous, and in various ways strove to relieve our necessities; and during all my travels in Mexico, I now can remember only one instance in which a priest turned a deaf ear to our application for assistance, and that one showed the miser and the brute in his countenance. But the character of the priests I will discuss at a future time.

I have hitherto said but little about the appearance of many of the towns that I passed through. The reason is this: there is a uniformity and sameness in them all, that would obviate the necessity of describing them. Leon, however, stands alone, and is in many respects different from the rest. It stands on a level, open plain, and for some distance around it there is nothing to obstruct the sight. Then large mountains rear their lofty heads, completely surrounding the valley; and, from the appearance of these mountains, there is no place presented to the eye where egress could be had from this city by any other way than ascending and descending them. There are some few cultivated fields, but the land is mostly barren.

The city is supplied with wood from the mountains. It is brought in on donkeys, which are very numerous here. I have often seen them moving along with a sort of rocking motion, loaded with hay or corn-stalks, and so completely covered up that nothing could be seen but the load they carried. We could see the load rock and move, but nothing that caused this motion, except sometimes the donkey's tail whisking about behind. They are gentle and

very docile. Children ride them without bridle or halter, just jumping on, almost always sitting on the hind quarters. They use a club, and guide the creatures by thumping them on either side of the head. This manner of guiding them does very well until some green fodder or other tempting morsel meets the brute's eye, when all the thumps and pounding on the head they can bestow avails nothing. Then all the rider has to do is to slide down over the tail, and by main force push him away.

These animals are never used except as beasts of burden; they carry water, wood, grain, and even furniture in removing. They are mostly owned by the poorer classes, who are not able to have mules or horses. They are generally driven in numbers. One man on foot takes charge of the whole, who, with a short club, thumps and pounds the refractory or the loitering ass, all the while uttering tesh! tesh! This sound comprises all the vocabulary for driving donkeys, and answers for *go on*, or *stop*. When they turn them, they go to the head and push them the way they wish to go.

The mules of this country are smaller than ours, and are used entirely for carrying packs; they usually carry a weight of four hundred pounds. Sometimes a good riding mule may be found; but this class commands an exorbitant price. It is customary for all owners of horses or mules to brand them; and these brands are good evidence of ownership, and can not be invalidated. When one purchases a mule or horse, he heats his iron, and joins it to one of the extremities of the other mark, and burns on the hide

the shape of the iron. Every man has a different mark, which is always recorded in the alcalde's office. In case a dispute should arise relative to ownership, reference is had to the alcalde, who examines the mark that was last made, and whoever owns this keeps the animal. I have seen horses with the neck and hind legs and hips completely covered with these brands. Should any one purchase an animal, and not put his mark on him, the last owner can claim him and hold him.

It is by means of donkeys and mules that commerce is carried on in the interior. They go in caravans, and frequently traverse the entire length and breadth of Mexico. This mode of transportation, together with the high duties, makes goods of all kinds very high.

I see that I have unwittingly wandered from my subject. I was giving a description of Leon. It receives its supply of wood from the mountains, and most of its provisions from other places, as enough is not raised in the valley to supply its wants. A good stream of water runs by one side of it. The place is regularly laid out, and well built. Round the Plaza the buildings are as well finished as any I have seen in Mexico. Its Cathedral is its greatest boast. This is a large and massive building; but, as I saw it only after sunset, and then very imperfectly, I can give no just description of it. I saw enough, however, to know that it is as large as any I have seen, with but two exceptions.

While here I had given me an American half dollar. This was the first coin of my own country that

I had seen for some time, and it brought back memories of the past. My old associations in the States were remembered at that moment, and the scenes through which I had passed since presented themselves to my mind as fresh as though they were of yesterday's occurrence. My mind then plunged into futurity, as though to ascertain what was yet in store for me. Long and gloomy was the road before me before I could possibly consider myself safe, yet I was not discouraged; and the confidence which had sustained me so far, I determined should not leave me now.

I had by this time become almost worn out, and it seemed as though I could stand it but little longer. The weather was getting hotter and hotter every day. Our course now was nearly south; the rainy season had passed, and the sun poured down its rays with intense heat. Our sufferings from this cause, added to that of thirst, were becoming very great. This may readily be conceived when I state the condition in which my feet were a few days before arriving at this place. I then had a pair of shoes; but so hot had the weather become, that my constant walking had blistered my feet all over; and so sore were they, that I was forced to cut the uppers off, and with strings tie the soles to my feet. In this condition I had walked several days. They were far from being well now; but they were so much better that I could, with some comfort, wear the shoes that were given me by the priest. My limbs were stiff and sore, a consequence of my great exposure; yet there was no rest. On, on we traveled; but how we were en-

abled to travel the distance we did every day is a mystery to me even now. Our daily marches ranged from seven to fifteen leagues.

To resume my narrative. Some little time after we had gone to sleep in the room given us, we were awakened by a loud rapping at the door. They seemed to be determined to break into the room. I got up, went to the door, and inquired who was there. No answer was returned. I had previously fastened the door, so that it could not be broken in or forced; yet I was a little alarmed when I remembered the violent altercation in the yard, just before night, relative to us; still, I determined to see who it was that was thumping on our door in this manner. So I took the sword that I brought from Calais, unbarred the door, and went out. Not a soul was to be seen. I then went back again, intending, should my nocturnal visitor come again, to let him stand at the door and rap till morning. I then bolted the door and went to sleep.

In the morning, when we got up, we found the yard nearly empty. The travelers had gone, and their servants were packing up the mules ready for a start. We were informed that the road to Lagos, whither we should go that day, was very much infested with robbers. It was mountainous most of the way, and very rough. The whole of it was a fit place for the rendezvous of bandits. We looked round to find some one that was going the same way, but none could be found. We then started alone.

For a short distance the road was level, but when we came to the mountains it was rough in the extreme.

It was all climbing hills, and then descending. For some distance there was scarcely any appearance of a track; in fact, we had to jump from rock to rock.

The distance to Lagos was fifteen leagues, and during the entire day we saw not a house or place fit for a human being to dwell in. Large herds of wild horses were seen pasturing around us on every side; we likewise saw several deer. These animals did not seem to be much alarmed at our appearance, but would stand and look at us, though at a respectful distance, as unconcerned as though they had been brought up by our own hand. Looking up the mountain on one side of us, we saw a large black bear slowly ascending, as though he thought the presence of man so near him was any thing but comfortable. This was the second animal of the kind I had seen in Mexico.

Our road now varied a little, inasmuch as it was not so rough. There was a foot-path, but on each side was dense chapparal, preventing us from seeing to any great distance; neither was it possible for us to lose our way, for out of the path we could not move ten rods without tearing our clothes and lacerating our flesh most sadly. I do not think that this is the main road from Guadalajara to Mexico; in fact, it could not be, for no stage could possibly be taken through here, and there is one running three times a week between those two cities.

The mail between the smaller towns is carried on foot. They have no post-offices, except in the larger cities. The alcalde, or the highest officer, always acts as postmaster. To show the amount of corre-

spondence that is carried on, I will relate one circumstance, though I shall anticipate by doing so. While in Amatlan, I saw the mail come in and opened; there were but three letters in it. This is a place of about one thousand inhabitants, and has a mail once a month. More of this hereafter.

Our road, during the latter part of the day, was more level, and the country showed some signs of being inhabited, as large herds of sheep and cattle were seen, though we saw not a house or cultivated field. Toward night we passed several droves of donkeys, which were going the same way that we were. At last we found one drove that was not loaded. Of the drivers we asked and obtained permission to ride, at the same time promising to pay them. We mounted and rode some ten miles. As we were much fatigued, this was a great relief.

At length we came in sight of Lagos, though yet it was a great way off. When within five miles of that place, the Mexicans wished to go another direction; I paid four shillings for our ride, and, with many thanks, we parted. At some distance we saw several large haciendas and ranchos; large and well-cultivated fields now cheered the eye; and this scene, in contrast with the portion we had come through, looked really beautiful and interesting.

About four o'clock in the afternoon we arrived at Lagos. Some time before reaching the city we passed by several extensive gardens, filled with large quantities of fruit of the most delicious quality. On each side of the road were high walls, but within these, oranges, lemons, and plantains grew to perfec-

tion, forming a perfect shade and pleasant walk. The odor from these various kinds of fruit was most delicious. But as yet not a house could be seen, as they were built back from the road, the trees and wall hiding them from view.

Just at the suburbs of the city there is a river some twenty rods wide, which we had to ford; but at this place it was very shallow, not over our shoes. Both above and below the city it is deeper, and the reason of its being so shallow here is because it passes over such an extent of ground. We soon waded over, entered the city, and inquired the way to the office of the commandante. On our way thither, while before a large and splendid building, we observed several gentlemen standing round. As soon as we came opposite, one of them addressed us in good English, and invited us to come in. We were taken into an office, when we discovered that the gentleman who had spoken to us was an officer of some rank in the army. He asked us where we were now from; we answered, from Mexico, and were now going to Mazatlan to take a vessel to our own country. He then asked if we were Irish. My comrade did all the talking now, and replied we were. He then asked whence we had deserted—from Monterey? Here I will remark that some thirty or forty had deserted from our army at Monterey. My comrade also stated that we first came to San Luis Potosi. He then inquired if we recollected the officer who received us at San Luis, and if we saw him now would we know him? My comrade was getting into rather a short corner; for I well knew that he had never been at

San Luis, and from the manner of his asking these questions, I suspected that our interrogator himself was there at that time, and did this duty. I also thought that I had seen him when I was confined in the jail in that city. From these considerations, as my comrade hesitated in answering, I replied, that if I was not much mistaken, he was the officer who did that duty. He then said that he was. We then, at his request, related many of our adventures since that time, all of which were true, but they applied to others, and not to us; I had heard them related, however, and, for the present, borrowed them. He then said that he would give us a letter to his father in Guadalajara before we went away, and requested us to call on him in the evening. We then took our leave, feeling quite elated at our good fortune.

On inquiring for the commandante, we were directed to a building across the street; we went in there, and found it to be a billiard-room. It was full of gentlemen, and they seemed to be very much interested in a game then playing. We soon saw the man for whom we inquired, showed him our passports, and asked him where we could sleep that night. He directed us to a meson a short distance off, and requested a young man to take us there. The person addressed started off with us; but, instead of going there, he went up to the further end of the town to his father's house. As we entered, the old gentleman arose and received us with the utmost cordiality. His wife seemed very much pleased with the privilege of entertaining us. The old gentleman, it seems, was a teacher of languages, and some of his

scholars were in when we entered; these he soon dismissed, and commenced a conversation with us. As I alone could talk Spanish so as to be understood, his conversation was mostly directed to me.

He asked about my country, its productions, climate, improvements, &c. By his questions, he showed a very good knowledge of the United States. I represented to him that the United States was my native country, though I was of Irish descent. It was a very painful task for me to prevaricate and evade the truth as I did. Still, self-preservation was an absolute master. He soon brought us some bread and coffee, and then took us to see his garden and fruit orchard, where the most delicious fruit was given us to eat. His whole grounds occupied some two acres; and the income derived from the sale of his fruit must have been considerable, notwithstanding the low rate at which it sold. The fruit grew at all seasons of the year, the trees being in blossom, and having green and ripe fruit on. Oranges were sold at the rate of sixteen for a sixpence, and plantains at the same rate. The supply never fails; and all kinds of fruit, of the very best quality, may be had for a mere trifle.

I could not but admire the tasteful manner in which this garden was arranged. Wide, graveled walks led through every part of it. In the center was a fountain, and around it were seats placed in a circular form. The whole was shaded by several large tamarind-trees. If any thing could reconcile me to a life in Mexico, it would be a residence in a place like this.

It was now after sunset, and it was time to go and see the officer who had so kindly offered us letters to his father. The young man, to whose kindness we were indebted for this recept[illegible] accompanied us to his office. He was not there when we entered, so we sat down and waited his arrival. In about half an hour he returned, and at once proceeded to write the letter. He requested his father to procure us some employment, and mentioned our respective occupations. When he had given it to us, he said, "With this you will be sure to find employment."

We soon returned to the house of our kind friend. Some of the neighbors came to see us, and expressed much sympathy at our hard lot. I had not been received so hospitably since my captivity, nor had so much pains been taken to make me forget the perils and difficulties of my situation; and I can now look back on the kindness I here received as the only bright spot in a year and a half of the darkest gloom, a period during which there was not a moment that I could consider my life safe. After partaking of a substantial supper, a bed was brought us to sleep on, a luxury we had not enjoyed for some time.

Next morning the old man took us to several houses, and begged for money in our behalf. Among the rest, we called on some priests, all of whom treated us with marked kindness; one of them gave us half a dollar apiece, and some shirts. He also pronounced a benediction on us. Thence our conductor took us to the outside of the city to a slaughter-house, and introduced us to the head butcher. He gave us something, and then we went inside to all the work-

men, from each of whom we got a sixpence;* and there being some thirty workmen, we got quite a little sum. We then went to the stores, all of whom gave readily; and by ten o'clock in the morning we had some eight dollars, which was quite a fortune for us.

We now went back to the house, where a good breakfast was given us, and then made preparations for leaving. Our friends urged us to stay a day or two more, that our clothes might be washed, a thing which they needed very much. But my companion was obstinate and deaf to good advice, so we bid our friends a reluctant adieu.

* The currency mentioned throughout these pages is that of New York, of twelve and a half cents to the shilling.

CHAPTER VIII.

Departure from Lagos.—A mournful Farewell.—San Carlos.—Stratagem to procure a free Ride.—The Alcalde.—Departure from San Carlos.—Trouble with my Companion.—Arrive at Sayula.—Religious Celebration.—Leave Sayula, and mistake the Road.—Consequent Sufferings and Danger.—A singular Concert.—Regain the Road.—Meet old Fellow-travelers.—Stories about Robbers.—We disregard them, and are Robbed.—Generosity of a Bishop.—Join some Mexican Travelers for Protection.—Peculiar use of a Revolver.—Dexterity of the Mexicans in using the Lasso.—Value of Mexican Promises.—Delightful Scenery.—Arrive at Guadalajara.

On leaving Lagos, our young friend, whose name was Martiniano Silva, accompanied us nearly a mile from the city. We parted from him with much regret, for we had become attached to him on account of the many favors he had done us. He seemed anxious to do us all the good he could; and while we were on our way, he inquired if there was any one going that road with donkeys, hoping to get a chance for us to ride. But he failed; and he appeared to feel more disappointed than we did ourselves. When we separated, he embraced us both in the Mexican style; and after many wishes for our future welfare, he left us.

Our course was now south; before, it had been nearly west. The weather had become intensely hot; and as my long journeyings and great exposure had reduced me to a mere skeleton, I began at times to despair of ever reaching any sea-port, or effecting my

escape; I seemed to encounter new difficulties every day. When I first started I was well and hearty; but now the reverse was the case, and several hundred miles were yet to be traversed. But I pushed on with renewed resolution.

About an hour after we had parted from our friend, a Mexican lad came running after us with all speed, driving some donkeys. Our friend had directed him to hasten and overtake us, and to let us ride. We gladly took advantage of this opportunity, and rode about ten miles, for which we paid one shilling each. This lift enabled us to make some thirty miles that day.

The country most of the way was extremely rough, and, after leaving the city, I do not remember to have seen a single field under cultivation during the entire day until we reached a hacienda, where we stayed all night. This hacienda was called *San Fernando;* and, from the number of houses occupied by the peons, I judged it to be a large one. The proprietor gave us a welcome, and treated us hospitably.

Next morning we made an early start, and about noon we came to a stream of water, where we decided to wash our clothes. Our custom all along had been to wash them, and then put them on, and let them dry on our backs. If this service was not done well, it was done as good as we could do it.

We that day went fourteen leagues, and at night arrived at a small village called San Carlos. I here determined to employ a little stratagem, to avoid, if possible, walking the next day. After some study, I figured it all out to my satisfaction. I went to the

alcalde with my comrade, and presented our passports. After reading them, he gave an order for us to be accommodated with quarters at the meson. As soon as I had got the order, I asked him if he could give us each a donkey to carry us to the next town on the morrow. He replied that they might be obtained by paying for them. But this answer did not suit my purpose. So I replied, "Sir, you no doubt are aware that General Santa Anna issued an order to all alcaldes and commandantes to afford help and assistance to every one of this San Patricio company on their way to the Pacific Ocean, both as to money and, so far as lies in their power, facilities for traveling." This order was countersigned by the government, and was the last act they did before leaving Mexico. He said he recollected that order very well. "Well, then, sir," I said, "as an officer of that company, and by authority of this order, I demand for our journey to-morrow either mules or donkeys;" and added, "in proof of what I say relative to my rank, I can show you my commission;" and I began to fumble in my pockets, as though searching for it. He, however, said it was not necessary, as he was perfectly satisfied; and he at once wrote an order for two donkeys to be ready in the morning, and handed it to one of his constables, who immediately went out. The alcalde then invited us to drink with him, an invitation which we accepted.

In about thirty minutes the constable returned, and informed us that the donkeys would be ready by five o'clock in the morning. He then went to the meson with us, showed us our room, and gave orders that

we should be supplied with our meals free, or at least free to us. This was rather more than we had expected, but it was not the less acceptable on that account. After we were alone in our room, we had a good jollification over the success of our stratagem. Such an order had been given by the government, and the reason we had not tried its efficacy before was that we doubted whether it would be obeyed.

At the time appointed our donkey-driver was at the door, thumping away with all his might. We soon turned out, got our breakfast, and, mounting our little animals, quickly got under way. They were so low that our feet almost touched the ground; but we pushed on at as rapid a rate as possible, and that day traveled eighteen leagues. I would here mention that a Mexican league is less than the French, being only two and three quarters of a mile. Their weights and measures, also, are less, nearly in the same ratio. We that day passed several ranchos and haciendas. The country was quite well cultivated. We passed several large fields of sugar-cane, and at almost every house they had for sale an abundance of various kinds of fresh fruits.

My comrade was so overjoyed at our good fortune that we had gone but a little way before he began to drink, and before night he was very troublesome. I was several times so provoked with him that I was almost inclined to leave him behind. He was continually quarreling either with me or our driver. When intoxicated, he was as deaf to reason as a block; but when sober, he was so humble, and would ask my pardon so earnestly for what had occurred, that

I could hardly make up my mind to part from him. He well knew that he could not travel alone, as he could not speak Spanish; he therefore saw the necessity of keeping on good terms with me.

We reached Sayula about dusk, and at once made our way to the commandante, who gave us an order for a room at the meson; and as it was late, we did not go out again. The next day being Sunday, we determined not to proceed very early, so we went into a fonda or eating-house, and ordered a breakfast. While here there came to us another of the San Patricio company, named Michael Burns, who had been here some time. With him my comrade was entirely at home, and they both drank until they were quite intoxicated.

I soon saw that there was no getting away that day; and as there was to be a religious celebration in the afternoon and evening, I was very willing to stay. So, having secured my room and the things in it, I went down to the Plaza. It was crowded with people, and every thing which the country afforded was here exposed for sale. The town is large, and contains several churches and a convent. As I greatly needed shaving, I inquired for a barber's shop, and was directed to one. On inquiring for the barber, he soon appeared, dressed in the uniform of a captain of the infantry. The operation of shaving was presently finished, and I then asked him if he belonged to the army. He said he did. I told him that in my country an officer in the army would consider it a disgrace to officiate as a barber. He made some vague reply to this; and, as he seemed anxious for

me to go, I handed him the usual sixpence. He said it was not enough; he required another sixpence. This I thought strange; but, as he was a captain, I did not know but he had raised his price; so, without further parley, I paid it and left, feeling much honored at being shaved by a captain.

In the afternoon preparations were made for a grand display; music was played, soldiers were drilling, and banners flying all over the city, and at three o'clock the great bell of the Cathedral tolled. At that instant a carriage, drawn by four mules, drove up in front of the church, and a load of fat, jolly-looking priests got into the vehicle. Other ecclesiastics came up behind, on foot; then came a body of soldiers, and then a company of young ladies, carrying banners, followed by a crowd of citizens, the whole preceded by a brass band. The procession then advanced till it came opposite to the convent, where it halted. A large cross, with the body of Christ represented on it as large as life, was placed between the priests and soldiers. This was shaded by a silken canopy, borne by four priests on poles high above the image; then, at the sound of music, with slow and solemn tread, the procession commenced perambulating the streets.

The performance did not close till after sunset, when the coach again drove up to the door of the Cathedral. The priests alighted; the soldiers returned to their quarters, and all was again quiet for a few moments. In the evening there was an exhibition of fire-works. I now went back to the meson, and found that my comrade had slept off his drunken fit. As usual, he was very sorry for what he had done.

In the morning we made an early start. Michael Burns had left us at night, saying that he should go with us in the morning; but, from what I had seen of him, I resolved that he should not; so, when we started, we did not wait for his appearance. We advanced, as we supposed, on the road pointed out to us, which led us directly across the mountains; nor did we find out our mistake until we had been two days on our journey. We then thought it best to pursue the same route, as we were informed that it came in on the one we wished to travel in the course of five or six days. It took us an entire day to cross the mountains, guided only by a foot-path, and even this was sometimes so indistinct that it could hardly be traced.

On this route we saw several places where mines had been dug, but at the present time they were not in operation. The history of these mines I tried to ascertain, but failed. That night we stopped at a small village, where our arrival produced the greatest excitement. The people appeared as though they had never before seen a foreigner; they, however, did not molest us, but escorted us in great numbers to the office of the alcalde, who treated us with kindness, and gave us permission to sleep in the office.

Next morning we started about eight o'clock. This valley is small and well cultivated. It is thickly inhabited, and yet the inhabitants appeared, for Mexicans, to be well off. We traveled about ten leagues, when we came to a place to which we had been directed in the morning. It was a small yet beautiful town, situated in a valley surrounded on all sides

by high hills. Beyond these is a beautiful and fertile plain, abundantly supplied with water. The only drawback on this part of the country is the great scarcity of timber; this, in fact, is the case with a great part of Mexico.

On learning that we came from Sayula, they informed us we had come far out of our way. There was, however, another route by which we could get back into the road we had left without taking a back track; but we would have to cross the mountains again; and they added that this was, in fact, the only direct route to Guadalajara.

I had yet some five dollars, and I had reason to be glad that there was so much left; for in these small towns it was impossible to obtain any more, and for the two last nights we had not found the people so hospitable as formerly. Not a cent of money would they give us, and we procured provisions only as we paid for them. The alcalde of this place even charged us for the room we slept in.

In the morning we took the road pointed out to us, and were told that in four days we would be on our old road. There were no more villages to go through, and but few ranchos or haciendas. We followed our road, which was nothing more than a foot-path, as best we could through the chapparal, and that night we slept out of doors. We had either lost our way, or, what is more likely, they had deceived us as to the distance of the place at which we should stop, for we did not come to it until noon the next day. We were by this time faint with hunger, not having eaten any thing since the morning of the day

before. We remained here till the next morning, and before starting we bought provisions for two days.

That day we traveled ten leagues, and at night we encamped in the open fields at the foot of the mountains. The following morning we made an early start. Huge mountains lay before us, which we had to cross. A small path, barely discernible, was said to lead to the opposite side. Our ascent was toilsome in the extreme; craggy rocks and steep precipices hindered our progress, and in some places it was so steep that we were forced to pull ourselves up by the bushes. The path could no longer be traced, and our only guide now was the top of the mountain. We were in hopes, when we arrived there, that we would be able to see some place that would serve as a beacon to direct our course; but we did not get to the summit till toward night, and our disappointment can be better imagined than described when we found there were other and still higher mountains yet to cross.

Our water had given out, and no more could be found. We had lost our way in the midst of huge mountains, and were compelled to pass another night there amid the haunts of beasts of prey, such as the panther and jaguar, and of the most venomous reptiles. Not a place could be found where we could lie down, and the night was like Egyptian darkness. We had no means of building a fire, and our feelings were any thing but pleasant when the howling of the wolves, the screaming of the panthers, and the loud roaring of the jaguar sounded in our ears. As the only means of saving ourselves, we got on the top of a rock some ten feet high, and nearly perpendicular.

This would afford us, we thought, a better chance to defend ourselves. We had come to this rock before dark, but did not get on it until we heard the howlings of these animals. Here we passed a long, gloomy, and dreadful night. The idea of sleeping never entered our minds; nor could we have slept so long as this horrible concert was carried on around us.

Toward morning it began to cease, and by daylight all was still. This was decidedly the longest night that I ever experienced. We were constantly looking round to see if we could not discover some appearance of the approach of morning; hour after hour did we watch in vain; but at length the morning star appeared, and soon after a few dim rays of light shot upward from the sun, which before long rose above the horizon. We now breathed freer, and felt ourselves safe, though we were not relieved from our difficulties.

We now prepared to descend the mountain. This was much easier than to ascend, as we could slide, jump, or tumble, just as it happened; so we got to the bottom by twelve o'clock. Here we found a stream of good water, and a path between the mountains, which I thought must lead somewhere—if not to the place where we wished to go, at least to some rancho. We followed it some three miles, when the mountains diverged from each other, and a most beautiful valley presented itself, extending in length as far as the eye could reach, but not over three or four miles in width. At some distance ahead we saw a rancho. To this we directed our way, and soon arrived there. We procured a warm breakfast, and

obtained permission to remain till the next morning, to recover from the fatigues of the preceding night and day. The inhabitants, though poor, were quiet and inoffensive people. I related to them the adventures of the night before, when they said it was a miracle that we had not been killed, as the mountains were full of ferocious animals. They also said that the road we should have taken would not have been half as tedious as the way we came, and that we were now some twenty leagues from the road that we had left. We offered one of our informants a dollar to go with us to the other side of the mountains, and leave us at a place whence we might easily find the way to the road. This offer he accepted.

At this ranch we had a good rest; and the next morning, feeling fresh and vigorous, we set off by daybreak. Our guide did not go directly over the mountains, but took a winding route, gradually ascending, and then descending. He did not go over the highest parts, but kept near the base. About sunset we got through, and our guide led us to a ranch where we remained that night. In the morning he showed us the way to the main road; and, after paying him his dollar, we parted, he no doubt as much pleased at his gains as we were with the services done us.

Our road was now mostly level, but the chapparal grew so thick that we could not see any distance from us; we therefore guessed at our course as best we could, and it happened that we were right. We came to the road about noon, and pushed on with renewed vigor.

That night we came to a small town, the name of which I do not now recollect. The alcalde gave us rooms at the meson; and here we found our old acquaintance, Michael Burns, as drunk as a lord. He had come in company with some Mexican officers, who were nearly as ragged as ourselves, and so poor that they begged their way as they went along.

The next morning we started in company, and kept together until noon, when we arrived at San Juan de los Lagos. Here we presented ourselves to the authorities, and had our papers countersigned. Our late companions were getting rather too drunk to be pleasant company, so we left them. As we were going out of town, we passed an old woman who was selling honey. This being the first I had seen, I bought some, and we ate it as we passed on. This proceeding attracted the attention of some youngsters, who followed us, crying, "*See the Yankees! see the Yankees!*" We turned around several times, intending to give some of them a rap with the cane; but they, considering discretion the better part of valor, would as often retreat to a respectful distance. At length we got out of the town, and the rabble left us.

Before us was a high and very steep hill, the road leading to the top by winding round it. On the outside of the track, which was some twenty feet wide, was a solid wall. When we came to the top, a wide and level country was exposed to our view. No houses were in sight; but seven leagues distant was a hacienda, as we had been told, where we resolved to remain all night. We arrived there after sunset, without any thing worthy of note having occurred.

The proprietor generously furnished us what provisions we needed and a room to sleep in, for which he would take no pay. Some time after dark the company that we had left behind came up. We heard them talking, but did not speak to them, having resolved to keep clear of them, if possible.

The next morning we rose early, and started before they were awake, intending that day to go to Tepatatlan, a long day's journey. We were here informed that the road was much infested with robbers, scarcely a traveler passing without being molested. This gave us some uneasiness; and we were advised to wait for the rest, as we would be more safe in going in larger numbers. I, however, determined to go on, thinking that we would be as safe alone as in the company of such vagabonds; so on we started.

The road was well beaten and easily followed, which was a great advantage to us, for no houses could be seen on the road side at which we might inquire should we become bewildered. In the afternoon we were suddenly surrounded by six men, and before any resistance could be made we were thrown down and our hands tied behind us. Two of them stood with loaded guns pointed directly at us, and they threatened to fire should we attempt to make any resistance. As this was useless in our situation, we of course submitted quietly. They then proceeded to search our pockets, and took all our money, and all our clothes except what we had on; but they left us our blankets, which was a great favor; they also gave us some meat and tortillas; but the gourd in which we carried water they appropriated to their own use.

They then left us, without untying our hands, with the usual *adios, caballeros* (adieu, gentlemen).

We now set to work to untie ourselves, which was no easy matter. By great exertions with my teeth, however, I managed to get my comrade loose, and he, in turn, loosened me from my bonds. We had some cigars in our pockets, and even these they took. The amount of money we lost was a trifle over four dollars; but the loss of our clothing was the greatest of all. This was the second time I had been robbed, and the only wonder is that I had escaped so well, for I had repeatedly heard of murders being committed; and, in fact, every day's travel furnished evidence of this, in the crosses that were placed beside the road.

We looked in every direction, in the hopes of seeing something of our late acquaintances; but they were not in sight, having probably concealed themselves behind some of the large cactuses, or in some deep arroyer or gulley. As we did not fear a second visit from them, we felt quite easy, but at the same time made the best of our way toward the town where we should stop. We arrived there after dark, and went to the alcalde's, who gave us an order on a meson. As we had no money, we went without our supper, being too tired to go out to raise any.

The next morning we went to a merchant, and told him what our situation was, and how we came so. He then gave us some breakfast, and directed us, in order to raise a little money, to go to the bishop who lived in the place, and who could talk English. We first went to some stores, where we received considerable aid, then to the bishop's. We were told to wait

a while. There were several poor, ragged Mexicans, apparently waiting for admittance likewise. We remained over an hour, when, becoming tired, we rose and left. We had gone but a few yards before we were called back, and at once ushered into the august presence of his honor. There were several priests in the room engaged in writing. Some of them, I thought, were quite young to wear the gown. However, they looked as though they were well kept. The bishop spoke to us in English, and asked what countrymen we were. We told him. He then asked how we had been treated on the road. We told him of the misfortune of the day before. He expressed great regret, and told one of his secretaries to give us two dollars each. We then took our leave, the old bishop asking us to pray for him. That he was no bigot, I learned from his own lips; for when I was conversing with him, he asked whether there were not many Protestants in my country. I told him there were. He seemed to pity their condition, and said that he prayed God would not cut them off, but convert them to the true faith. This sentiment was not in unison with that of other priests whom I have heard express themselves toward Protestants; for they would denounce them, and consign them, without judge or jury, to the lower regions of Purgatory, subject to the concentrated vengeance of the Almighty. I sincerely believe that, were the rest of the priests in Mexico as liberal in their principles as this bishop, there would be less suffering and much less crime than there is.

We were ready to start about noon. But, before

leaving, we were informed that the road to Guadalajara was worse and more dangerous than any we had passed. This alarmed us; and our alarm was increased when they told us of some companions (meaning some of the San Patricio company) who had been killed on that road. With heavy hearts and gloomy forebodings we pursued our way; but we had gone only a short distance before my comrade came to a halt. The stories he had heard had made such an impression on his mind that he was fearful to proceed; and, in fact, I was in some such predicament also. So, after a few moments' consultation, we resolved to go back and wait till some traveler should be going that road, in whose company we might proceed more safely. Accordingly, back we went. We stopped at the same meson we did the night before. After we had made the necessary arrangements, we went to the other mesons of the city, but did not hear of any one. At sunset we went again, and fortunately found a gentleman with two servants going the next day. With them we engaged to go. They had an extra horse, which they said we might ride, and we started in their company the next morning.

The extra horse we were to ride by turns. Before leaving, however, my comrade, unknown to me, bought a bottle of liquor, and drank several times before starting. After we had left the city he kept drinking until he became a little more than gentlemanly drunk. As soon as his bottle became exhausted, he then would stop at every house we came to and take another horn, so that before night he was so drunk that we had to hold him on the horse. This conduct

so disgusted our new friends that they declared he should not ride any more after that day. And it was with much difficulty that I could persuade them to let him remain on the horse even that day. The next morning they reprimanded him severely for his ill conduct the day before, and then told him that if he drank any more, he must leave their company. All this my friend took in good part, well knowing that he deserved it; he was as humble and penitent as a poor sinner could well be, and made all sorts of good promises for the future.

After a while all was ready for a start, the gentleman leading the way, and the servants, with the mules and baggage, following after. On the road to-day I observed the old gentleman look at his pistols as though examining them. He would then fire, discharging the six barrels in rapid succession. He appeared to be aiming at something; but, in reality, I think it was more for effect than any thing else, for it is well known that the rancheros are terribly afraid of a revolver, and, should any be lurking in our immediate vicinity, the knowledge that one was in our company would rather cool their ardor and keep them at a respectful distance. We were not molested, however, though we passed through some places where the inhabitants looked as though they would really like to have the pleasure of cutting our throats.

The second night of our journey from Tepatatlan we stopped at a hacienda. It looked more like a village; but I was told the inhabitants were all servants to the dueño or master. Here one of those scenes occurred that show the expertness of a Mexican on

horseback with the lasso. This is a rope, some thirty feet long, one end of which is made fast to the saddle, and the other formed into a noose, which slips with ease. When in pursuit of cattle or horses, they approach sufficiently near, swing the lasso (which is coiled up in their hand) round their heads until it has a sufficient impetus, and then, with perfect aim, throw it over the animal's head.

Children practice with the lasso as soon as they begin to walk by throwing it over a post, or catching cats, dogs, or any thing that comes handy. In this manner they become perfect adepts in its use. At this place they wished to catch a horse which was a little wild and gave them some trouble. By frequently changing horses, they at length run him down so that they could approach him near enough to insure success. One of the Mexicans then gathered up his lasso, swung it round over his head until a favorable moment, and then, with unerring accuracy, threw it over the horse's head. The animal he rode seemed to understand the business as well as his rider; for, when he saw the lasso had gone, he suddenly stopped, braced back with all his strength, and was absolutely immovable. The rope now so severely choked the other horse that he could not move another inch. He was soon broke so as to lead well, and within an hour after they rode him with the saddle. He was now completely subdued.

The next morning we pursued our journey. My comrade had so far regained the good-will of the Mexicans that they permitted him to ride. As we passed through several small places, we were somewhat

abused by the people; some would hoot at us, and others would throw stones or dirt, exclaiming, "Curse the Yankees." And I verily believe that, had it not been for the presence of the Mexicans in whose company we were traveling, our lives would have been in danger. Burns, whom we had left behind, in coming through here was beaten so severely that his head was swelled up, and for some time he could scarcely see, so that on his arrival at Guadalajara he was compelled to go to the hospital.

That night we stayed at a small town only a day's journey from Guadalajara. So many dangers had we passed through, that the prospect of a few weeks' rest, which we determined to take, raised our spirits above our present condition. The old gentleman in whose company we were kindly gave us all that we needed to make us comfortable. With me he became quite familiar, and would frequently urge me to go to his house, where, so long as I should remain with him, I should never want. This show of unusual generosity I afterward was taught to estimate at its right value. The Mexicans frequently use a thousand such expressions, but with no idea of ever being called upon to fulfill them. At a period subsequent to the time of which I am writing, I was once expressing my admiration of a gentleman's horse. He replied, "There it is; you may have it." This was a mere show of liberality; for he would have been very careful how he made that offer had he thought there was any danger of my accepting it. I, however, did not so understand the old gentleman. Still, I declined his offer.

We did not start so early as usual this morning, as we had but a short distance to go. The road was rough and rocky, and the country, in most places, was entirely uninhabited. The few people that I met looked more like a set of cut-throats than any I ever saw before. Near noon we came to a small town called San Pedro, about three leagues from Guadalajara, which was most decidedly the prettiest Mexican town that I had yet seen. It was regularly laid out; the streets were wider than usual; the buildings were only one story high, but beautifully finished, and its churches were large and gorgeously ornamented, both inside and out.

Here our Mexican friends were going to stop for the day, and we parted. I could not leave the old gentleman without expressing the deep gratitude I felt for his great kindness toward me. I was fully sensible that I could not have got along alone as safely as I had in his company. This continued kindness made a lasting impression on my mind, and I now take great pleasure in recalling this and similar instances. After leaving the old man we went round the town, got us a dinner at a fonda or eating-house, and then started for our journey's end.

Just as we were leaving the town, a Mexican came running up to us, asking if we would take a ride on a donkey. His charge to carry us three leagues was one shilling each. This was cheaper than to walk, so we engaged him. A number of others pressed round us, all having something to say, one asking to be employed, and another—all together making a noise equal to the runners at the landings of our

steam-boats or rail-roads. We, however, succeeded in mounting the donkeys that were brought out to us, and started. The road was level, and on each side, all the way, were some large and beautiful shade trees. The country, as far as the eye could reach, was as level as a floor, yet only small portions were cultivated. Here and there was seen a cluster of trees, and within these were houses belonging to the different haciendas. This portion of the country was the most beautiful of any I had yet seen. The seats, placed along by the road side, under the trees, at regular intervals; the situation of the houses, almost concealed from sight by the forests of fruit-trees; and the surrounding fields, covered with cattle and horses, altogether presented a scene worthy a painter's pencil.

Our driver kept hurrying onward, urging the animals to their utmost speed by the frequent application of his club, accompanied with the usual vocabulary for urging them forward.

In about two hours we came to what is called the *garita* or gate. Here a guard of soldiers was stationed; and here we dismounted, paid the man of donkeys, and walked on we knew not whither.

CHAPTER IX.

Unexpected Hospitality.—New Acquaintance.—Description of Guadalajara.—The Cathedral.—Remarkable Picture.—Resolve to part from my Fellow-traveler. — Applications for Employment. — Bad News.—Fall in with an American.—Political Parties.—Paredes.—His Insurrection.—A Comical Battle, followed by a Bloodless Victory. — Run of good Fortune. — My Safety is endangered by an Order of the Authorities.—I am betrayed by my new Acquaintance. — But, warned of my Danger, I defeat the Plot. — Leave Guadalajara secretly with my old Fellow-traveler.—Wretched Appearance of the Country.—Singular use of a Thirty-two Pounder.—La Venta.—Etztlan.—Scene at the Meson.—I procure Employment.—Part with my Fellow-traveler.—Mexican Sabbath.—Start with my Employer for his Residence.—An Accident.—The Secretary.—Arrive at Iztlan, my Employer's Residence.

We were now in a city which ranks second in size and commercial importance in Mexico, but where to go or what to do we knew not. A short distance from the gate, as we were passing a house, a man came to the door and called us in. We went, some chairs were handed us, and soon after some native wine was given us to drink, of which we partook. A woman soon came in, bringing some bread and cheese, on which we made a good meal. After some conversation, we inquired if there were any of the San Patricio company in the city. He replied there were, and told where they might be found. He also gave us the desired information as to what we should do; and added, that it would be very dangerous for us to

go out much at night, as the city was full of robbers and assassins. He gave us much good advice; and on our taking leave, he went a short distance with us to show the way.

It had been all along represented that here our lives would be in continual danger, that the city was full of desperadoes, and that murders and robberies were of daily and nightly occurrence. This report subsequently proved to be true only to a limited extent. I heard, indeed, of several robberies, and saw three dead bodies that had been found in the morning; but the kindness of this man set our minds at rest, in a great measure, as our first entrance here had been marked by an act of great kindness that was entirely unexpected and unasked for. We, however, determined to pay heed to some of the advice that had been given us.

After considerable trouble we found the Plaza, to which we had been directed. Here we presented ourselves to the colonel commanding the garrison in the quartel, and he gave us quarters with the non-commissioned officers. During the afternoon and evening several Irishmen came to the quartel to see us; they were deserters from the American army, and had been here some time. The appearance of one, in particular, deserves notice. He formerly belonged to the dragoons, was at the battle of Vera Cruz, and deserted just before the capture of Mexico. He was now teaching the sword exercise; and as he had a full school, he was making money. In excuse for deserting the American army, he said that, as an Irishman and a subject of the British crown, he could not

legally enter into a foreign service; that that very act would brand him as a traitor to his country; and that his enlistment in the United States service was a mere formality. His oath of fidelity he held to be a bugbear; he was not a naturalized citizen, he said, and his oath was not worth a straw; and it was, under these circumstances, morally and legally right for him or any other subject of Great Britain to desert the American army. As he appeared to be a leader, the rest echoed his opinions. For my part, as I did not wish them to know my real character, I said nothing in reply to this logic.

In the evening he and my comrade went to a grog-shop, and remained there most of the night. They became so drunk as to be unable to help themselves, and others were forced to carry them to the quartel to the rooms assigned them.

Next morning we were directed to go to the commanding general of that department, who would give us an order on the treasury for three dollars, the rest having received theirs. Accordingly, we went to his office and presented our passports. He countersigned them, giving us permission to go to San Blas, and then directed his secretary to write an order on the treasury for three dollars each. We then went to the building next to this, and entered the office, where were some twenty clerks. I presented my order to the first one I came to; he directed me to an officer who was sitting at the head of the room. To him I went. He read our orders, wrote something on the back, and sent us to another office, where were only two men. Here we presented our orders, and they

endorsed them, and paid us the money, when we thought ourselves rich.

The next day we presented our letter that had been given us at Lagos, and found that the gentleman to whom it was addressed was no less a person than the vice-consul of Spain. He read our letter, and gave us three dollars each. This was good luck doubly multiplied. After reading the letter, he said he could give us no definite answer until the morning following, at which time we must call again. We then left to take a stroll round the city.

It (Guadalajara) was more beautiful than we had expected, being regularly laid out in squares. The streets are mostly narrow, but all of them are paved. The houses are two and three stories high, well finished, and beautifully painted. There are some two or three convents, and a perfect host of churches. The Cathedral is one of the largest in Mexico. It has several entrances, and the high altar is on one side. Over it is a statue of the Virgin Mary, dressed up in gaudy colors, and inclosed in a glass case. Around her neck is a gold chain, and a golden dagger hangs at her side. On a wall opposite this is the image of Christ, as large as life, nailed to the cross. The blood is represented as running from his wounded side; the spikes through his hands are visible; and a crown of thorns is on his head. This also is inclosed in a glass case. In other parts are niches in the wall, in which are placed the twelve apostles. In parts not occupied by these images are numerous and valuable paintings. Some represent the death of Christ, his resurrection, and ascension. Another represents a poor

soul in purgatory, which is painted as a place of punishment, surrounded by a high wall. One old sinner is trying to crawl out; but there are devils stationed at certain intervals on this wall, with long spears in their hands, to push down any poor soul that should attempt to climb up the wall. Red, fiery flames play about them, and huge masses of black smoke curl over their heads. The whole is designed to represent the vengeance of the Almighty to its full extent. In the center of the floor, and elevated about two feet, was the pulpit. There were several ornaments of pure silver and gold, some of them very large and immensely valuable. This is the largest Cathedral that I ever saw, the best furnished, and the richest.

The inhabitants of Guadalajara, so far as I could ascertain, are better informed and more refined than in any other part of Mexico. The reason of this is probably its foreign commerce; for the intercourse with other countries from this city is quite extensive, and numerous foreigners were then residing there. I saw several factories, one of guns, another of paper, and another of cotton. All these were conducted by foreigners.

A very large and fertile valley surrounds the city. Provisions could be had very cheap; and fruit was supplied, even to excess, at a very low rate. But articles of clothing were very high. This is the case with regard to the other parts of the country also; and for this reason, the lower classes wear pantaloons and jackets made of goat skins.

Next morning, at the appointed hour, we waited on the consul. He then informed us that he had no bus-

iness for us to do, but if we would go to his hacienda —distant fourteen leagues—and work on his farm, he would give us what we earned. To this we made no answer, but left, promising to return and inform him of the result of our decision when it was made. This prospect we considered little better than none at all; to go on his hacienda, and place ourselves on a level with his rancheros, who were not so well off as the majority of slaves in the United States, was an idea not to be entertained for one moment. American pride could not succumb to this. Bad as our situation was, it would have made us worse off than before to have accepted this offer.

My comrade at this time drank so very hard that I resolved to leave him. He had already betrayed me to his own companions, telling them what was my real character; but, as no prospect of bettering my condition appeared, I remained with him. By his excesses he soon spent all his money, and he was then dependent on me for what he ate and drank. We had been here now near a week, during which time he had spent over six dollars, and I less than two. Very soon he had taken all my money, and I resolved to leave him. To do this successfully, and without fear of exposure from him, required some management.

Some of this San Patricio company, through the influence of some officers, obtained work in the arsenal at making gun-stocks. One young man was here at work with whom I had become quite intimate. From the fact that he was an American, and free from the gambling and drinking habits of the rest of

his comrades, he knew my whole history, and made application for me to obtain work at the same place that he did. As I did not understand working with carpenter's tools, I was unsuccessful there. But as I had seen several harness shops, I went to one and applied for work. I was asked if I could stitch; and at the same time they handed me a trace, on which to make a trial. They had but few tools, and these were not like those that we use. However, I put the work in a pair of clamps, and went to work. It soon appeared that I could stitch as fast and as well as they, and I was then offered two shillings per day and board myself, this being the wages of all Mexican mechanics. I thought that if they were fools enough to work for such wages they might, but I would take a tramp first.

Thence I went to a coach-making establishment, conducted by a Frenchman. Of him I asked a job of work at trimming, having also, at a former time, worked a little at that. He asked my terms; I told him twenty dollars per month, as long or as short a time as I wished to stay. He would engage me, he said, but for a period of not less than six months; I could not possibly remain so long as that, and therefore I declined making a bargain. In fact, it was only my wish to get fifteen or twenty dollars, to enable me to pursue my journey in an independent manner.

My money had now given out, and I was reduced to great distress; over one day had passed, during which time I had nothing to eat. I knew not what to do; work could not be had at prices that would

keep soul and body together, and I felt ashamed to beg. In this emergency, a gentleman by the name of Jones, who had resided in the city some years, accidentally learning my circumstances, started a contribution for me, and I received five dollars.

I had previously left the quartel, and gone to the house of one of the two men who traveled with us a few days prior to our reaching this city. I had met him at the house of the old gentleman, on whom I had called according to agreement, and he invited me to go to his house. I did so; and a room was given me to sleep in free of charge. But I did not board with them. The young man who worked in the gun factory slept here with me. It was my intention to remain with him until he had money enough to carry us to the sea-coast, when we would start together. But we little know what a day may bring forth. I saw my old comrade daily. He had sold all the clothes that he could spare to furnish money for liquor. Rumors were in circulation that the Americans were landing at Mazatlan and San Blas, and that they contemplated an advance on this city. Consternation and alarm were depicted in every countenance, and the subject was discussed among the officers of government of forcing all the deserters from the Americans into their service. Five days would decide the matter whether it would be necessary or not.

This news came on us like a thunderbolt. Guards were to be sent to all the gates and all the streets leading from the city to watch and examine every person who should enter or go out. I now determ-

ined to leave forthwith, as this guard was to be set next morning. I went forthwith to the factory, where were some Americans. It was about three miles from the city. On my arrival there, I went direct to the office and inquired for the director in Spanish, as I saw but two clerks at their desks. Another gentleman, whom I had not seen, answered in English that he was the person for whom I inquired. I then told him my situation (omitting, however, that I was a prisoner), and that I was anxious to get out of the country. I asked him if he would afford me any assistance. He replied that he had been so much troubled with such characters—meaning deserters—and abused so often, that he had concluded to give them no more. He made several severe remarks about them, showing that, though he was now in Mexico, he was an American still. I then said, "Sir, are you an American?" He said he was. "From what state are you?" "Massachusetts." "Then, sir," I replied, "as you are an American, I can trust you with a secret which, were it divulged here, would cost me my life." I then added, "You probably have seen an account of the capture of a train of wagons by General Urrea on the 24th of February, 1847." He said he knew all about it. "Well, sir, I was taken with that train, and with my comrades marched to the city of San Luis Potosi, suffering on the road hardships almost incredible." I then stated how I came to be separated from them, and to pass this way. In proof of what I said, I showed him my passport, saying, "This reads that I am an Irishman, but you, sir, know it to be false."

I also showed him my notes that I had kept, and succeeded in preserving thus far. In addition, I showed him my card, drawn from the Odd Fellows' Lodge to which I belonged previous to my leaving the United States, and which I had kept by means of a belt that I wore next my skin. He then said that I was engaged in a dangerous and desperate enterprise, and that I could not have been aware of the many perils I had escaped. He also said that I was in great danger at the present moment, for, should I be detected, my life would not be worth one straw.

He then conversed with me about the situation of Mexico. There was no unanimity, he said, in the government; party feeling ran high, and always destroyed the effects of the wise and judicious measures that were often adopted by the government. As instances of this party feeling, he stated that Santa Anna was desirous of destroying the influence of the Church by depriving it of its property. This caused a revolution in the city of Mexico. He had avowed his intention of taking the property of the Church to supply his military chest, and when he was going to the city to seize what could soonest be made available, the priests engaged in their pay all the clerks and young men in the city to defend it. The streets were all barricaded, and old Santa was forced to abandon this project. Subsequent to the capture of Mexico, it had been rumored that Santa Anna was in favor of the United States, and that it was his intention eventually to deliver the whole country into the hands of the Americans. This rumor was believed among the Mexicans, and the priests formed another

party, which was by no means inconsiderable. This party was in favor of a foreign monarch, and its influence was great, as they had control of two thirds of the wealth of the country. Another party, by far the most numerous, but less wealthy, was in favor of a native monarch, with a strong and vigorous government. This comprised the middle and lower classes.

We had a long conversation on these subjects, and then changed it to one more in unison with my situation and feelings. I inquired if he could correspond with his friends in the States. He said he could, as a British mail went through once a month. The letters he sent went to Havana, and thence to the States. I asked and obtained liberty to write to my friends to inform them that I yet was in the land of the living. This was the first opportunity I had had to write home for nearly a year. I gave a short account of my capture, my travels, and escape up to that time. When I had sealed it, he took it and promised to forward it by the first mail, a promise which he faithfully performed.

He now gave me the additional information, already stated, that nearly every battle which had been fought with the Americans had been followed by one between themselves. One of these occurred near this factory on the 18th of May. This was a revolution got up by Paredes, who was a native of this place. I will give a short description of this general as I saw him riding through the streets. He was of short stature and very slender, so that when mounted on his horse he looked like a half-grown boy. He

was of a very dark complexion, with a high, prominent forehead, and keen, piercing black eyes. Altogether, his appearance was too insignificant to lead one to think that he could be capable of making so much noise in the world.

Of the object he had in view in instigating this revolution I am not fully informed. However, as its result was so comical, it will bear relating.

The two armies were maneuvering in the valley close to the factory for some days. At last both parties made preparations for an attack. There was a hill between the two encampments which both started to ascend at the same moment, each army supposing that the other was still in their camp; nor were they undeceived until they had met; then one fire was exchanged, and both parties retreated down hill, each supposing that the other was pursuing. After they had run some distance, one of the officers belonging to the insurgents looked back, and, seeing no one, ordered a halt. He then went back to see where their enemies were, when it was discovered that they, too, were running with all their might. This officer then claimed the victory, on the ground that he occupied the battle-field. This was a bloodless victory. It, however, did not end the revolution, for the government made great exertions to bring into the field its entire force, and they brought the insurgents to an action. After a sharp conflict, a large portion of the latter went over to their enemies, and this ended the revolution. I saw several houses that were literally riddled with cannon balls, and on the walls were marks of the musketry. Pa-

redes was banished from the state for a while, but at the time I was there he was back again.

By this time other Americans came into the office, to whom I was introduced. One of them I found to be an Odd Fellow. The director told them who and what I was, and they gave me one dollar each, and wished me all success in making my escape. As it was now noon, my brother Odd Fellow invited me to go with him to dinner, an invitation which I gladly accepted. He occupied a neat, beautiful house, on entering which he introduced me to his wife. As she was the first American lady I had seen for some time, I thought she was the most beautiful woman I had ever beheld. For the first time during a long period I sat down to a dinner cooked in good Yankee style. I now look back on this interview as one of the brightest spots in a long and dark captivity.

After dinner my friend gave me a coat, shirt, and pantaloons, and a dollar in money. I then left the factory to return to the city with feelings of deep gratitude to all the Americans who resided there. Should these pages ever meet their eyes, I would return them my most grateful acknowledgments for their kindness, well knowing that the consciousness of having succored an American in distress is a more ample recompense than I can possibly bestow.

When I came to the city I took a circuitous route to go to my lodgings, intending to seek my new comrade, but before getting there I met my old one, he being in search of me. He told me some news which caused me to decide to leave town instantly, or, at least, that night, and in his company. The

news was that, owing to the late rumors, an order had been given to stop all of the San Patricio company from leaving the city, which order was to be carried into effect the next morning. He further said that the young man with whom I had lately associated, and with whom I slept, had that morning informed the officers at the quartel of my real character, and some inquiry had consequently been made for me. He had heard my comrade say that he would bring me up there the following morning. On this they rested satisfied, not thinking that I would hear of my danger before that time.

As I would have my liberty until the next morning, and as I had to go down to my lodgings, where this young fellow was, to get my clothes, I determined to take such measures as would effectually silence him for a time. I then went to a druggist and got a good dose of laudanum, bidding my companion meet me there at such an hour and be ready for a start. I then went down to the house where I lodged, and found this base scoundrel awaiting my arrival. He seemed glad to see me, and soon began telling of a job of work that we could get at the quartel, and that he had promised to go up with me the next morning to see about it. I readily promised to go, and ordered some coffee made. When it was done, I went to bring it in where we were sitting. On the way I poured most of the laudanum into his cup, and then gave it to him. We drank our shares, and in a very short time he wondered what made him so sleepy—I, at the same time, wondered what had made him such a scoundrel. He soon fell asleep, when I

picked up my clothes and bid him an eternal adieu, sincerely hoping that he would wake out of this sleep after I was out of danger; but if, on the contrary, he did not, I considered myself perfectly justifiable in doing as I did, for my life should not be forfeited through the treachery of one whose sole object was gain.

I now went to the place appointed, where my companion was waiting my arrival with some anxiety. He did not know what means I had used to get away, nor did I ever tell him. We knew the road which we were to take, and pushed on at as rapid a rate as possible. My comrade was excited by the fear of being forced to join their army again (which, he said, would have been worse than death), and I by the fear of a pursuit and recapture, which would have been certain death. We traveled all that night, and, as we were fresh, made good speed.

In the morning we laid by and slept a while, and then resumed our journey. That day we came to a guard-house, some twenty leagues from Guadalajara, where was stationed a small garrison of soldiers. When we came up the officers were pitching quoits. We showed them our passports; they signed them, and gave us some money. We then quickly passed on, for we knew this was a dangerous experiment. Had these officers received the orders respecting the San Patricio company, it would have ended our journey. Our reason for applying to them was to ascertain if such an order had been given out, for, had it been so, we should be liable to be arrested at any future time, even if we passed this station. We there-

fore determined to ascertain at once the extent of our danger. After they had signed our passports, we knew that at present no danger was to be apprehended.

We now pursued our journey, free from any apprehensions of a pursuit, and traveled as fast as we could. We had been informed that there were no towns of any size on our route, with but two exceptions, Etztlan and Ahuacatlan. We were therefore in great danger from robbers on this road, as there were large numbers of them.

On the second day's march my comrade began to drink again; at every house we came to he would stop and drink until he could drink no more, and then would go, as he best could, to the next one. In this manner the day passed off, and we had gone only ten miles. On balancing his accounts the next morning, he found that he had lost or drank away all his money, amounting to five dollars. I now told him plainly that this must be the last time he got drunk; for if it was repeated, I should leave him, as it was running too much risk to conduct in that manner among the Mexicans, when we were almost entirely depending on them. My remarks seemed to have the desired effect, and he promised that the like should not occur again. I had some five dollars, and he had to look to me for his daily food.

There was nothing to distinguish this part of the country from other portions that we had passed through. It was very rough and rocky; the mountains seemed to draw nearer together; and there were very few spots capable of being cultivated. Univers-

al desolation seemed to reign; and at some distance ahead, it seemed as though the mountains came together, leaving no passage between them, which afterward proved to be true.

We now pursued our journey with some security and comfort. My comrade begged for even one dram of liquor whenever we passed a place where any was sold. He would beg with all possible ardor; but it was all in vain. No liquor would I furnish; but provisions, such as he or I needed, I would cheerfully provide.

The fourth day we came to a small town entirely surrounded by mountains. We here went to the alcalde; but he refused to furnish us with a room, and even threatened to confine us in jail. For what reason he took this course, I can not imagine. However, he did not execute his threat. We then went to the meson, where we found some officers who were going to Guadalajara. They ordered us a room, and gave us some money.

The next day we came to a small place at the foot of the mountains. The houses were poor, miserable huts, not fit to be called houses, and occupied by, if possible, still worse-looking inhabitants. As I could see nothing but rocks and musquit bushes, I could not conceive what they lived on. I went to several huts, and inquired for something to eat; *no hay! no hay!* (there is none), was the invariable answer; and I verily believe they told the truth. We then moved on, to get out of this place as soon as possible.

We now began to ascend a high mountain. The road leading up its side had been dug from the solid

rock. On the outside was a thick and solid wall, built, I suppose, to prevent any one from falling off the side. The road wound up with a zigzag course, something like the shape of the letter S. When we arrived at the top, on looking down we could see the houses very indistinctly; but not a moving object could be seen. From here the road was level for a short distance, then again was another mountain for us to climb, the road winding up and walled as before.

After we had got to the top of this second mountain, we again saw a level country and a few houses. I also saw a field of corn, and concluded that where there was corn there must be something to eat; so we stopped at a house, and got a good meal of tortillas, jerked beef, and beans. We then started on. A short distance from this house we passed a large gun, a thirty-two pounder. I was told that it had been left there by the Spaniards during the Mexican revolutionary war. Here it now was forming a portion of fence. They had attempted to bring it from Tepic into the interior; but so rough, rocky, and mountainous was the road, that they could take it no further. I was told that during that war, this portion of the country had been the scene of many sanguinary battles and many bloody massacres; and afterward, during my residence here, I was shown places that had been entirely destroyed; men, women, and children had been mercilessly butchered, and not a soul left alive to tell the sad tale. We now came to Tiquila, a rough and savage-looking place, where we remained for the night.

The next morning we left at an early hour, and

about noon came to a place called Magdalena. Here we called on the alcalde, who gave us a dinner free of charge. We then passed on. Some of the country was marshy; and at a distance from the road was a lake. It did not appear to be deep, but it was of considerable extent. As we wished to go to La Venta, the nearest good place to stop, we were forced to hire a man with two horses to convey us thither, as it was nearly night, and the distance was about three leagues. For this service I paid one dollar; and right glad was I to do it, for the inhabitants looked as though they would like to cut our throats, and we were afraid to trust ourselves with them for the night.

The horses were soon ready for a start, and we put them on a good round trot. For a short time we made good headway; but it soon grew dark, and our road was among rocks and gulleys. We then went slowly, our guide in the mean time enlivening our spirits by telling us of a robbery and murder that had been committed a short time before, close to where we then were. It was as dark as it could well be, and our guide lost his way. This perplexed us, for we knew not but he was connected with those robbers, and had conducted us to this place to bring us into their power. He went to search for the way, leaving us alone, and we made up our minds to sell our lives dearly, should we be attacked. He, however, returned after an absence of half an hour with the cheering report that he had found the road. We now pushed on with all speed, and about ten o'clock arrived at the meson where we were to stop. The landlord, before he would consent to let us stay, de-

manded our passports. When he had read them, a room was given us. We then got supper and went to sleep.

In the morning we paid our bill and started. We were only seven leagues from Etztlan; but the road was extremely rough, and surrounded by high mountains. About three o'clock we came to that town, and presented our passports to the alcalde. He gave us a shilling each; and my comrade soon drank to intoxication, abusing the Mexicans to the best of his ability, so far as his limited knowledge of the language would allow. He called them bastards, thieves, and cowards. Such language exposed him to severe punishment; and the only wonder is how the alcalde and the rest of the gentlemen restrained themselves under these insults. I was requested to take him into the office, and make him lie down until he got sober. I accordingly went and spoke to him with this purpose, when he turned on me, and in a most insulting manner said, "Who are you? You are not one of the San Patricio company, but a prisoner—" Before he could say the rest I had knocked him down, and after he fell I knocked him till he could say no more. One of the constables now came up to take me off; but, before he could do so, the alcalde seized him by the coat collar, thrashed him about a few minutes, and then let him go, with orders not to interfere any more with me. After I had sufficiently punished the miscreant, I left him, but he was unable to move. The constable was then ordered to take him into the office, and there leave him till he had slept off his drunken fit.

I here became acquainted with a lawyer named Don Pedro Martinez, who, after having conversed with me some time, at last inquired if I understood grammar, geography, and arithmetic. I answered in the affirmative. He then wanted me to write a little for him. I did so. He seemed to regard this as a great curiosity, and showed it to all who came round. He then asked if I understood Latin. I said I did, and Greek also. He then got a law-book, with some Latin reading in. This I read to him readily and correctly. Some Greek sentences that he found I also read to him. He now said that if I would go to his place, and teach his boys the English language, he would board and clothe me; and when I could speak and write the Spanish language better than I now could, he would put me in good business in the mines, of which there were many. This offer I determined to accept, not only on account of my drunken comrade, but also from the fact that, as yet, the American fleet was not at San Blas, and I knew that I could leave at any time after they did arrive. He said his place was twenty leagues distant, and that he should start thither on the next Monday. This was Saturday. As my money was about gone, he gave me sufficient to last till that time.

The lawyer now took me to see some of his friends among the higher classes, and I was treated by them with great kindness. They seemed to be free and frank, and conversed without that reserve which is often displayed toward strangers in other countries. But as it was getting late, I returned to the alcalde's office. My comrade was yet in a profound sleep.

I rolled myself in my blanket, and went to sleep also.

Next morning my fellow-traveler woke up very early and aroused me from my slumbers. His first remark was, "Well, I was a little tight last night, was I not?" Then he began making apologies. I stopped him short by asking if he knew what he had said to the alcalde, and the rest who were standing by, the night before. He said he did not. I then told him, and added, that the alcalde was going to put him in jail as soon as he came into the office in the morning, and that he would have done so last night if I had not begged him to forbear. At this he burst out with the exclamation, "My God! my God! what shall I do?" After a few moments, I told him that his only course was to leave as soon as possible, and not let the alcalde see him there at all. To this he consented; and forthwith he packed up his things. I told him that I should go no further with him, on account of the offer I had had. He advised me to take it. I then divided my money with him, and we parted. I have never seen him since, and my impression is that he was killed on the road; for, when I was afterward in Tepic, I inquired at the British consul's relative to him, but was informed that he had never been there. I had heard that one of my companions was killed about this time, but never supposed that it was he until my arrival at Tepic.

The next day being Sunday, I went to church. There was but one, and that not extraordinary. Two fat and lazy-looking priests stood at the altar, going through their ceremonies, while the congregation were

all kneeling, and every few minutes crossing themselves, and thumping on their breasts, with solemn faces. While a few devout persons were here worshiping, the Plaza was filled with people buying and selling; and, in other places, some were gambling. The day finished off with cock-fighting, at which large numbers attended, and heavy bets were lost and won.

This is a fair picture of a Sabbath in Mexico. The people generally attend church in the forenoon. After that, it is gambling, drinking, and fighting; and it not unfrequently ends in murder. The priests are greatly to blame for this, for they not only attend these places, but also bet, both with the greasy ranchero and with the well-dressed aristocrat.

The next morning the lawyer came to the alcalde's office, saying that he was ready for a start, and wanted me to go with him to his house. We there found the baggage packed on the mules, the horses saddled, and all ready to depart. The place to which we were going was called Iztlan. We took the same road that I had traveled the week before, until after we descended those high mountains which I have already described. We stopped at a rancho after dark, not being able to finish the journey that day.

My friend, previous to starting, had armed me with a brace of pistols and a sword. His fear of robbers was great; and he asked me many questions as to whether I would be afraid if we should be attacked. He seemed to be satisfied with my answers, for he sent me on ahead in company with his secretary. A portion of the road was very rocky, and, after it became dark, it was difficult to discern the path. After

a while we were called back by those in the rear, and, from the noise that was made, I thought they were either attacked by robbers, or that something else serious had happened, so we put our horses on a full run to give them assistance. On arriving there, we saw that the difficulty was quite serious. The lawyer's wife had lost the path, and her horse had got into the midst of huge masses of rock, and was pitching and rearing, trying to extricate himself. The lady, being unable to maintain her seat, fell on one of those rocks, and was nearly killed. When we came up she was utterly unable to move, and was supported by her husband and the two servants. Martinez now ordered a bottle of aguadiente (that is, brandy) to be brought from his saddle-bags, handed it to his wife, who drank a little, and took some himself. It was then passed to all hands. The secretary, I now found, drank with a right good will, and the bottle was passed back and forth between us until we had nearly drained its contents. In about an hour we succeeded in getting the lady on her horse, and then proceeded to the place where we were to stop.

As this secretary will figure largely hereafter as my comrade, a short description of him will not be out of place. His name is Jesus Murguir. Jesus is pronounced like Khesoos. *J* sounds like *kh*, the accent on the last syllable, the *u* sounding like double *oo*. This is a very common name in Mexico, and is given to both males and females. The sex is distinguished by prefixing *don* for males and *donña* for females. Other names also are common to both sexes, the termination *o* denoting the masculine, and *a* the feminine

gender. But as it is not my province to write a treatise on the language, I return to the secretary. He was of a slender make; his complexion was perfectly white, with keen, piercing black eyes. He was one of the most jovial companions I ever met with, generous to a fault, and as regardless of money as of the ground he walked on. His parents lived in the town whither we were going, and were the wealthiest in the place, counting their property by hundreds of thousands. The only faults that I could charge to Don Jesus were drinking and gambling, to both of which vices he was a most abject slave; and by these he had lost a splendid fortune. I frequently conversed with him on the subject of their national religion, the character of their priests, &c. In reply, he said that the Mexicans were all fools to be thus led by the nose by a set of worthless vagabonds, as he termed the priests, bishops, and all who were connected with the Church. He said that he had not been at confession for fourteen years; and when he was married, he refused to confess, but deceived the priests, so that they performed the marriage ceremony. I asked him what he should do if he was going to die. He said the priests were but men as he was, and some were much worse; therefore they must be unsafe agents to take care of the souls of men; and if he was going to die, he would confess to his God, as the supreme Ruler of all, and the only Being who was able to forgive. These were rather heterodox sentiments for a Catholic, and would have consigned him to the tender mercies of the Inquisition, had there been any in the country. I afterward found many wealthy individuals,

who thought and felt the same, as I will show hereafter.

On account of the illness of Don Pedro's wife, we remained at this rancho three days, and on the fourth proceeded on our journey. We took the same road that we had previously taken for about three or four leagues, until we were near Magdalena, when we turned to the south. For several leagues the road was through a fine and beautiful valley, until we came to a small village, where we baited our horses and took dinner. We then pushed on over the mountains. After crossing these, Don Jesus pointed to the town where we were going. As yet I could see nothing but a large forest; not a house was visible. The country round us was level, and appeared to be well cultivated. The village now could be discerned among the trees. The road passed by two beautiful little lakes. About four o'clock in the afternoon we entered the town.

CHAPTER X.

I become acquainted with the higher Classes.—Their Manners and Character.—Appearance of the Ladies.—Peculiar Mode of Salutation.—The Clergy.—Different Classes.—Their Revenues.—Character of the Priests.—Service for the Dying.—Crosses and Medals.—Description of the Country round Iztlan. — Mines. — Mode of extracting Silver. — Visit to a Silver Mine. — Account of a peculiar Tribe of Indians.—Causes of Indian Degradation.—Mode of Protection against the Cold.—Mexican Dogs.—A great Festival.—Theatrical Performances.—Placed in a Dilemma regarding Matrimony. —A singular Trait.—My Expectations are frustrated.—Character of Don Pedro Martinez.—Interior Arrangements of Mexican Houses. —Music.—Rumor of President Polk's Death.—How received.—Sad Results of the War.—Cause of the frequent Revolutions in Mexico.—Cock-fighting.

Soon after our arrival, the house was thronged with visitors, who came to welcome the return of Don Pedro. I was introduced to them all, and they seemed to regard me with much curiosity; many of them, probably, had never seen a foreigner before. In the evening my patron, as the Mexicans called him, paid a visit to several of his friends, and nothing would do but I must go with him. At every place where we called, the lady of the house would, after some conversation, bring me a glass of wine or a cup of chocolate. I was afterward frequently invited to their houses, and treated as though I had been a prince; not that they really considered me as a person worth minding, but as a man in distress. They considered I had claims on their sympathy, and they strove to

make me forget the troubles through which I had passed. I therefore enjoyed opportunities for observation that I had never before possessed.

The higher classes of this part of Mexico are early risers; and when they first get up, a cup of chocolate, with bread, is brought them. This lasts till ten or eleven, when a regular breakfast of meat, beans, and tortillas is served up. About three in the afternoon they dine. At five they take another cup of chocolate; and they sup immediately before they retire for the night, which they generally do about eleven o'clock. Knives and forks and spoons are seldom used in eating, and never except among the very wealthiest; they are too costly an article for common use. They take their meat in their fingers and tear it in pieces, and double up a piece of tortilla to answer for a spoon.

They are good cooks, and know how to please the most fastidious; but some of their habits are not in accordance with our views of cleanliness. I have seen women sitting at the door, looking over each other's heads, and every little while a quick, jerking motion of the hand, accompanied with a cracking noise of the nails, indicated their success in the hunt. When it is meal-time they go to cooking without washing their hands—a thing, in fact, which they often do only once a week. Yet they are neat and very tasteful in their dress.

The Mexican ladies are very kind-hearted, and make affectionate wives; but, unfortunately, they are often unfaithful. They are quick, violent, and impulsive in their feelings; and in this lies the secret

of their ruin. This feature is not confined to the lower classes, but is common to all, both rich and poor, high and low. The ladies of pure Spanish blood are eminently beautiful. In this place there were quite a number of them. Their complexion was of marble whiteness, showing a delicate and slight rosy color in the cheek, with bright, large, dark eyes and heavy eyebrows. Their voices possess a flute-like softness; and when heard from such lips, one will readily acknowledge the sweetness of the Spanish language. Yet the moral deformity mentioned above often spoils all their charms.

The Mexican women, as a general rule, are not handsome; they are, more or less, mixed with the Indian race, and want the clear complexion which we deem essential to female beauty; but they have large, dark, sparkling eyes, high-colored lips, and good teeth. Their manner, however, is their principal charm. Whenever I entered a house (which even a stranger might do and be sure of a welcome), the señoras would offer a seat, without rising, and would at once enter into conversation, with a very engaging piquancy and vivacity. After a short absence, a pretty doña immediately grasps her friend by the hand, and embraces him. This habit struck me at first as rather forward; but its every day occurrence soon showed me that it was only a common mode of recognition, and I soon became so used to it that I actually enjoyed it. But the real grace and gusto with which two dirty and ragged old beggars will thus embrace and hug each other is a singular sight. This practice is not confined to either sex. I may here re-

late how I was first victimized by this friendly embrace. During my residence in this place, I went to visit a friend at his rancho, some distance in the country. I remained there several days; and when I was about to leave, I went to shake hands with my kind and beautiful hostess, and bid her good-by. She would not be satisfied with this, but at once embraced me. This rather set me back; but, not willing to appear bashful, I embraced her also, and with a good will; and, in my ignorance, I proceeded to increase the fervor of my embrace with a few hearty kisses. I did not discover my mistake till a roar of laughter from behind led me to perceive my blunder. I was afterward very careful not to go any further than I saw others do; and by this watching, I soon learned to conform to their customs without offending good manners.

I now come to speak of a subject that I would rather omit. From the priests I have, with but one or two exceptions, received nothing but kindness. They are generally well informed on all subjects, and for the most part liberally educated; but they are bigots in every sense of the word. The clergy are divided into three classes: the bishops, who have control over a state, or perhaps more; the curas or curates, who have control over one, two, or more churches; and the common priests, whom the curates pay by the month, generally at the rate of from twenty-five to fifty dollars each. I am not acquainted with the province or peculiar duties of the monks, and therefore I do not mention them.

The revenue of the cura is derived from his mar-

riage, funeral, and baptismal fees. With regard to the amount of marriage fees, each cura regulates that in his jurisdiction; and it is from fourteen to one hundred dollars, according to the condition of the parties. It often happens that the bridegroom is not able to pay the fee, in which case, as the man of God is inexorable, the poor fellow goes home, and, with the friends of his intended wife, gets up a fandango, which answers the same purpose as a wedding. This is the cause of there being so few marriages among the poorer classes.

The baptismal fees are from three to ten dollars; this, also, is regulated by the cura. The burial fees are higher, ranging from thirty to one hundred dollars, and none can have the benefits of mass and a burial in consecrated ground unless these fees are paid; so that those who are too poor to afford this are compelled to bury their dead in the field or by the road side.

The revenue of the bishop is derived from a tithe or a per centage of the wealth and income of all the inhabitants. He claims a tenth part of the annual produce of all their stock (horses, sheep, and cattle) and lands, or an equivalent in money, and the poor laborer is forced to pay the tenth of his scanty earnings. This mode of taxation swells the income of a bishop to thousands of dollars annually. There are many, however, living in remote districts, who never pay his lordship their quota of tithes. In such cases the bishop has a right to take by force the portion belonging to him.

I have seen some priests in this place so intoxica-

ted as to be unable to walk alone, and they would seek company in the gutter, or cling to a lamp-post, and there remain until some passers-by took them up and carried them to their homes. In doing so they always took off their hats, and did not replace them until they had deposited their sacred burden in his own house. This abject deference paid to the priests is universal. Even the richest, who, if any, could claim exemption, never meet one without taking off their hats, and if they stop to speak, they remain uncovered till they pass on. If a priest enters a house, the inmates all rise and remain standing, unless he seats himself, when they do so likewise. By the discipline of the Church they are bound to a life of celibacy, but as they have passions like other men, and the articles of their faith do not much help them to subdue these passions, they indulge in the grossest licentiousness, and their characteristic appearance is that of a bloated and sensual class of men. I do not speak at random, but have abundant proofs of what I assert. It may not be the same in other countries—I hope it is not; but here, as I feel bound to state what I know, however repugnant to my feelings, I must say that these things are so.

I will now describe one of the ceremonies of their Church, as it shows the character of their religion. When a person is sick, and is supposed to be at death's door, the great bell tolls, the people all flock to the church, and wait for the appearance of the priest. His carriage soon drives to the door, and he enters, dressed in gorgeous robes. Candles are then distributed, which they light, and sally forth, the men

before and the women behind the carriage; and as they pass along, they say prayers for the benefit of the dying person. All take off their hats, and along the streets through which they pass, all who are not in the procession kneel, remove their hats, and go to praying with great apparent fervor. This they call *God going to give a through ticket to paradise;* but, from the noise and number of people engaged, it more resembles a motley crowd than a rational manner of serving the great Jehovah. When the priest passes in his stately coach, should a poor sinner be so stubborn as to refuse taking off his hat and kneel down, it is usually knocked off, and he is forced to kneel. It is truly surprising how the educated and thinking class of this people can be made to believe in these mockeries; but they adore their priest more than their God, and his word is absolute law.

The habit is universal among the Mexicans for both sexes to wear around the neck a medal or cross, suspended by a rosary. The medals, which are of brass, and of English manufacture, often bear the image and name of the patron saint of the wearer, but, more generally, they are stamped with the figure and name of "*The Lady of Guadaloupe*," of whom they tell many miraculous stories. On the reverse of the medal is inscribed, "*Non fecit taliter omni nationi*," which a late writer on Mexico wittily translates, "*She never made such a fool of any other nation.*" The crosses are often of silver or gold.

The love of ornaments and false jewelry prevalent among the lower classes is remarkable. Every woman has her fingers loaded with brass rings set with

glass; and such is the demand for these trinkets, that traders find them the most profitable articles they can carry out.

I will now give a brief description of the country around Iztlan. On one side of the village is an extensive valley, and several lakes can be seen within the circuit of two leagues. The village itself is well built, and richly adorned with handsome public and private gardens. The various kinds of tropical fruits are grown to perfection. In the rear of the town are vast mountains, raising their tops to an immense height; they seem to be piled one on another, and thrown together with the utmost confusion. I judged that their average height exceeds six thousand feet, because eight thousand is said to be the region of perpetual snow, and many of these were covered with snow, while there is little difference in their average height.

There are numerous mines of silver, several of which are extensively worked. Their method of extracting the silver deserves a short notice. It is brought from the mines by pack mules, and when enough is collected to enable them to grind to advantage, it is ground fine, and then placed in a vat filled with water. It is now stirred till all the dirt is washed out. Below the vat are earthen cups, placed at regular intervals, for two rods or more, so that, should any silver escape from the vat, these cups would catch it. When it is all washed out, the water is drawn off, and the silver is collected by means of quicksilver. From the smallness of their mills, it is a slow and expensive process.

I was one day invited by a proprietor to visit one of his mines on the opposite side of the mountain. A mule was furnished me for this purpose, and we started at an early hour. Our course was winding, to avoid as much as possible the steep precipices, of which there are many; and in some places it was so steep that I thought it was impossible to ascend; but the mule is a sure-footed animal, and ascended those places with the ease and agility of a deer. After a three hours' ride we came to the opposite side, when another beautiful valley was presented to our sight, and a large and beautiful town, called Ahualulco.

We soon reached the mine. Here a small hut was built to accommodate the miners, and around were large quantities of rock that had been blasted, ready to be packed off on mules. After partaking of a lunch, we entered the mine. The passage was narrow, so low that we could not stand upright, and so dark and winding that none could traverse it without a light, however well acquainted with it. In several places the vein ran into branches, and these had been worked to the termination. To prevent accidents from caving in, every cavity was propped up with heavy timbers as they advanced. The vein had been worked to the depth of a hundred yards, and its size varied from one to one and a half yards square. After they had blasted, the rocks were carried out in a sort of basket, made of thick, heavy hides.

This mine yielded, on an average, twenty dollars daily; and so long as it yielded that, they would not abandon it. The miners had a certain proportion, which made their wages better than working on a

farm. At three o'clock we mounted our mules to return. While we were yet on the side of the mountain, I got along very well; but when we came to the steeps, it appeared so dangerous to remain on the mule, that I dismounted and slid down, not being able to walk. By doing so I exposed myself to the ridicule of my companion, who descended in safety, and with perfect ease. We reached home about nine o'clock, greatly fatigued after so hard a ride.

These mountains, I am informed, are full of mineral wealth, principally silver and copper. The latter is seldom worked, as it does not pay the great expense of mining. Gold is occasionally found; but the veins are not so large as the silver, seldom exceeding one or two fingers, and they are generally imbedded in a whitish quartz rock. The gold is pure, never being alloyed with any other metal.

There is one peculiarity in these mines that struck me as something quite singular. It is, that where silver is found in large quantities, gold seldom occurs, at least not in the same mountain; and the reverse also holds true, for where gold is found in any quantity, silver is not. This feature may not be applicable to all parts, but I was informed by the oldest and most experienced miners that it is the case here.

At Iztlan I saw some Indians that were very different from the regular Mexican Indians. They lived about twenty leagues distant. The account I heard of them is so singular that I consider it worth relating. It is derived from a priest of this place, and therefore entitled to some credit. They are a large and powerful tribe; and from the best information

that can be obtained, they occupy one of the largest and most beautiful valleys in Mexico, which is completely walled in by high and almost impassable mountains. Living in this retired spot, they had never been conquered by the Spaniards. They have maintained their primitive language and forms of worship, and in nothing have they become assimilated to the Spaniards. No stranger is allowed to reside among them. Some Catholic missionaries had attempted to do so, to convert them to the Catholic faith; but they were expelled, though without violence.

These Indians are said to be in possession of some very valuable mines of gold and silver. They make annual excursions into the neighboring country to sell their wares. But few of them can speak any other language than their own. The party that I saw consisted of six tall, straight, athletic men, accompanied by an interpreter. Their articles for sale consisted of blankets, baskets, and silver-ware. Their blankets were the most beautiful of any that I ever saw, being made of the finest wool, and dyed of various and brilliant colors. Their silver-ware consisted of pitchers, cups, and vases, well shaped, beautifully engraved with hieroglyphics, and profusely ornamented with gold and silver. From the style of the workmanship, I was sure it could not have been executed by a Mexican artist, but that they themselves must have been acquainted with many of the arts of civilized life.* I felt a great desire to visit this singular

* In their manners and dress they appeared every way superior to the Mexicans, and their mechanical skill was certainly of a high order.

tribe, who had successfully resisted all attempts to conquer or convert them; and for this purpose, I pressed the interpreter to obtain this privilege for me of the man who appeared to be the leader. A shake of the head invariably showed the result of my application.

This short account of these Indians suggested many reflections as to the causes of the present degradation of the Indian population of Mexico. Originally they were conquered more effectually by the priests who had been sent from Spain, than by the force of arms. Being naturally fond of parade and show, the priests adapted their worship to their peculiar tastes; they introduced the greatest pomp into their religious services, held numerous festivals, in which was a grand display of fire-works, processions, &c. This was just suited to the capacity of the simple-hearted Indian; and their speedy conversion was the result. Intermarriages followed, making their subjugation more thorough and complete. This was a master-stroke of policy; and its success showed the wisdom and sagacity of its projectors. But where a tribe or nation has been successful in keeping entirely separate and distinct from their invaders, allowing and preventing all settlements within their borders, they have preserved their independence with the same language and system of worship that they had during the reign of the Montezumas. The further pursuit of these reflections I will leave to abler writers.

It was now the middle of January, and the weather was bleak and cold, the immediate vicinity of these snow-capped mountains causing it to be much colder

than otherwise it would be. The Mexicans obviated this by increasing their quantity of clothing, as less expensive than keeping fires, which they never use more than is absolutely necessary to do their cooking. Wood is a costly article, and is bought as they require it, by the sixpence worth. At this rate it costs at least ten dollars per cord. Charcoal is also much used in cooking, and sold at sixpence the half peck. At these rates, it is easily seen that fires can not be kept by the common people for the purpose of warming rooms or making them comfortable, but every Mexican wraps himself closely in his blanket. This is an article of universal use; it serves as a coat, umbrella, and bed, and nothing so truly indicates the wealth of the wearer as this. They may be had at prices ranging from two to one hundred and fifty dollars. The more costly kinds are extremely fine, and require from four to six months to weave them. A Mexican never goes from home any distance without his blanket; and if on horseback, he is usually armed with his sword. This latter practice, however, is more the result of custom than necessity. If a man is only going to his hacienda, where danger could not possibly be apprehended, he makes the same preparation that he would for a long journey.

I have not yet spoken of the immense number of dogs in this country. It seems to me to be beyond all calculation. They are said to be mostly crossed with the prairie wolf, and have a miserable, mean appearance; I do not know that I saw a fine-looking dog in all Mexico. The pet dogs are called "comanche," for what reason I know not. They are not

large, and are entirely without hair, presenting a disgusting and filthy appearance; and to strangers they are very annoying. I should advise every traveler in Mexico to provide himself with a revolver, for at sight of this they apprehend danger as readily as their masters. This is a safeguard against all evil doers, both of man and dog.

About this time occurred a festival which I had never witnessed before. The place designed for the exhibition was the *Plaza de Gallos*, or place used for cock-fighting. This was a large, round building, furnished with seats one above the other. There were two entrances to it, at one of which scenery was erected, and staging for the accommodation of the performers. Every thing possible was done to make a fair representation of a theater.

On the day appointed, this apology for a theater was crowded to overflowing, the aristocracy attending with anxious curiosity depicted on their countenances. The performance commenced at an early hour. When the curtain rose, there stood a man dressed with a long black robe, trimmed with broad silver lace; his head was girt with a wide band, richly studded with silver, and long, curling ringlets fell gracefully over his shoulders. Above his head waved a majestic plume. In a low, trembling voice, he began a colloquy; and he was soon joined by another man in a military uniform. Violent words were exchanged, which ended in a furious quarrel, when the curtain dropped.

This was the first scene. The second soon followed; for now all were startled by the sound of

jingling bells, and the discord of many voices attempting to sing. On looking at the entrance opposite the stage, we saw ten or twelve men coming, dressed in a most fantastic style, each one bearing a long pole, to one end of which was attached a bell. They advanced with slow and measured step, singing as they advanced, and keeping time with their music by bringing their poles heavily on the ground, and causing the bells to jingle. Their music resembled a congregation of owls giving concerts more than that produced by human voices. On coming to the stage, they stopped, held a short colloquy, and then ascended it. Some earthen pots were now brought in, filled with victuals. They all sat down to eat, and a more grotesque or ridiculous scene could scarce be imagined; each one tried to excel the other in playing the monkey or the fool. A good half hour was thus occupied, when they arose, sang another song, and the curtain dropped.

Another scene was now introduced. A young woman, whose beautiful dress set off her more than lovely face to good advantage, was alone on the stage. She commenced speaking in a low tone, when she was joined by her husband. They were on a journey, troubled with that worst of all complaints, want of money, begging charity at every door, and at every door refused. A donkey was then brought in, with which to pursue their journey. The lady mounted; but his donkeyship, either not liking the appearance of things around him, or being naturally a little mischievous, refused to stir. They beat him and pushed him, but all would not do. The more they wanted

him, the more he wouldn't. At length he responded to their attentions by kicking, which he did in a manner that only a donkey knows how. The lady was greatly frightened, but could not dismount. The poor animal then took a sudden start, and jumped off the stage into the midst of the ladies below, producing the greatest confusion, and screams in abundance. Here he was soon brought to a stand; the lady dismounted, and soon ascertained that she was not hurt. She again ascended the stage, when she was joined by another lady, dressed in a similar manner. They held a short colloquy, and then left the stage. A man now made his appearance, dressed in a most comical style, and his habiliments were arranged in such a manner that it gave him the appearance of a giant; his hat was near eighteen inches high, and the rim ten or twelve wide. He attempted to play the clown, and to his auditors afforded some amusement; but I thought it any thing but amusing.

At the commencement of the performance I had been invited to sit in a private seat, occupied by a lady and her daughter. When the two ladies made their appearance on the stage, the one next me inquired which of the two I thought the most beautiful. I replied that the one by her side, her daughter, I thought, was the most beautiful, and, if I was allowed a choice, I should prefer her to all the others in the crowd. This I thought would be the end of the matter. But my lady friend thought otherwise, for in a few days I received an invitation to call at her house. Wondering, and not dreaming what could be the object of this request, I went there forthwith.

She received me with great cordiality, handed me a seat, and at once commenced conversing about the performance of the other evening. After she had dwelt on generalities as long as it suited her, she asked if it was my intention to remain in Mexico, and not return to my country. A very faint idea of what she was driving at now dawned on my mind, and I shaped my replies accordingly. I therefore told her I should remain here. She then inquired if it was really my intention to marry. I told her that one great difficulty hindered me, which was the want of sufficient funds to enable me to enter at once into some lucrative business; and the objection that most young ladies would have to wed with one so advanced in years (I was actually twenty-six), and who was both a stranger and a foreigner. To this she replied, that with regard to funds it was of minor consequence, as they could easily be supplied; and the latter objection was of no weight, as age was not considered, and foreigners were preferred to natives. This last assertion my after experience proved to be true.

After beating the bush some time, she asked me, in round terms, how I would like her daughter. To this home question I replied that, as it was a subject so entirely new to me, I must beg the indulgence of a few days to consider it, when I would give her a decided answer. With this assurance she seemed satisfied. I then took my leave, promising to repeat my visit soon. With regard to the young lady, I can only say that she was in possession of considerable property, and exquisitely beautiful, and that she

would, no doubt, have made as good a wife as any Mexican woman.

I have mentioned the preceding scenes, as showing the state of the people in regard to taste and intellectual culture. The Carnival continued some three weeks. I will say no more of it here, but may speak of it hereafter when describing other festivals. With regard to the proposition for marriage, it need only be said that matrons do not think it at all indecorous to seek husbands for their daughters, neither do the daughters think it out of character to ask a young man to have them. The most probable reason why I was received thus favorably was, that on my first arrival, my friend Don Pedro, either because he was anxious to show off the value of my acquaintance, or for some other reason, I know not what, had reported that I was not only an Irishman, and of course a good Catholic, but was, in my country, a man of wealth. They finally got it that I was some way connected with some noble family; and as the report was so currently believed, I of course would not deny it, but was willing to enjoy all the benefits of my newly-acquired honors; and, if I am not mistaken, the prospect I had of getting a rich wife was wholly or in part owing to these reports.

It will be recollected that I came here with a view of teaching some little boys the English language. I have nearly overlooked this subject. On my arrival at my friend's house, he showed me two bright, mischievous-looking boys, who hereafter were to be placed under my tuition. I soon ascertained that as yet they could hardly read; I, however, engaged in

my new duties with as much industry as I could muster. They would sometimes be rather stubborn and refractory, and I took the same measures to make them submit that I would have done under the same circumstances in my own country. But it did not suit the case here: the old man fretted; the woman scolded; the boys ran away, and I closed my school. I soon found that nothing which had been promised me relative to business would ever be performed. Don Pedro was as kind and obliging as ever. But the difficulty was, that not one of the many promises he made did he remember five minutes after he had made it. His profession yielded him a great income, but so bad was his management that he was always poor. He was a slave to the vice of gambling. When he was lucky he generally gave me a good portion of his winnings; and if an insult was given me, he would resent it as quickly as though it had been offered to himself. He once went out of his house, sword in hand, to punish a drunken wretch who had thrown a stone at me, and he was appeased only when the man was taken to jail. From these circumstances, I am thoroughly convinced that he would have done all that he promised could he have been made to act while it was yet fresh in his mind; but he was too indolent to do more than he was actually compelled to do for his own subsistence.

I must now give some account of the interior arrangements of a Mexican household. In the largest houses they have but few rooms, but these are large and spacious; chairs and sofas are not used except by the very wealthiest; but, where it can be afford-

ed, benches are substituted. Often there are none even of these, when the ladies are forced to sit on a mat, which is spread on the floor. This mat is also used to sleep on. Very few have tables, and those that I saw were made of oak plank, some two inches thick, three feet wide, and generally eight or ten feet long. An American lady would, in my humble opinion, cut a poor figure in commencing to keep house with no more furniture than this.

The Mexicans have a great taste for music. The guitar and the harp are the instruments most generally used, and these they touch with exquisite skill. It is quite amusing to see dirty, ragged beggars take hold of these instruments and play at the fandangoes, attended by the aristocracy, with the skill of a celebrated artist.

At this time a rumor spread that President Polk was dead. The news diffused universal joy throughout the village; the bells were rung, guns were fired, and in the evening there was a display of fire-works. They rejoiced because they hoped that now peace would be made. The nation was tired of the war. They said that they were already so largely in debt that it was almost impossible for them to get out of it, and this war was plunging them into debt still deeper and deeper. Their ports were all blockaded, and foreign commerce was stopped, producing a perfect stagnation of trade. Their business men were all opposed to the war, but their military leaders panted for glory, and they reaped it in defeat. But that this war will be of some ultimate benefit to Mexico, every candid man will admit. They may,

for instance, see the utility of forming a strong, vigorous government. The experience of past misfortunes should suggest improvements for the future. That they are incapable of governing themselves, their past history plainly shows, and they have still nearly an annual revolution. The people have no sectional jealousies—nothing to cause these frequent pronunciamentos. They are the result of having so many restless, turbulent spirits commanding their armies. So long as these are suffered to dictate to the civil rulers, as they often do, so long will they have an unsettled and unstable government. When speaking on this subject, I have heard eminent men say that they really hoped the whole country would come under the jurisdiction of the United States, for then they would have a strong and vigorous government, capable of carrying out its measures with energy. Of this they had ocular demonstration during the war.

Having mentioned the subject of cock-fighting, I may add that this practice is universal in Mexico, and at Iztlan it is practiced with a zest and frequency truly remarkable. Every Sabbath afternoon the Plaza de Gallos is filled; judges are chosen; a ring is formed; and the combatants, being previously armed with long, sharp steel gaffs or blades, fastened to their spurs, are then let loose, when they fly at each other in perfect fury, and use their steel blades with great precision. One is generally killed, and sometimes both. When a stranger comes in with a game-cock, and wishes to give a challenge, he procures a red sash, and folds the little warrior within

it; he then gets some one with a violin, and with this music marches all over the town. This is considered a challenge, and in the afternoon the place is crowded to witness the combat. At these amusements I have seen thousands of dollars change hands at a single game. Judges are appointed to decide the game, and also to hold the stakes. Bull-fighting is another common amusement; but, never having witnessed one, I will say no more of it.

CHAPTER XI.

Departure from Iztlan.—Arrive at Amatlan.—Visit to a Gold Mine.—Situation of Amatlan.—Hot Spring.—Mexican Names.—Practice of Medicine.—Office of Alcalde.—Judicial Cases.—Mode of Swearing.—Join an Expedition against a Band of Robbers.—The Result.—Career of a Murderer.—Schools.—Peonage.—Gambling.—Fandangoes.—The Carnival.—Lent.—Processions.—A serio-comical Scene.—Visit another Gold Mine.—A Rose in the Desert.—Remove to Garabato.—Remarkable Phenomenon there.—Disgraceful Scenes.—Stung by a Scorpion.

I WAS now very anxious to leave Iztlan, though where to go I knew not, as I had been informed that the American fleet was not yet at San Blas. I made frequent applications to my friend Don Pedro for permission and assistance to leave him and go to Tepic. To this he strenuously objected. He urged the dangers of the road, and the present impossibility of getting out of the country. It was useless to urge, for to let me go he would not consent; and, in order to induce me to remain, he now mentioned the subject of marriage with the young lady before spoken of. He said she was in favor of it, and her mother was anxious to have it take place. He further said that, with her wealth, I could live like a gentleman, and no longer be a beggar as I had formerly been. Our conversations on this subject were numerous, and at length I desisted entirely from mentioning it. His secretary, however, took part in my favor. He advised me to remain quiet for the present, for in a few

days Don Pedro was going to a distant place on some business, to remain several weeks, and he would manage it so that I should go with them, and thence I could easily get to Tepic.

I now appeared to be contented, and not in the least desirous of leaving. At length the day of departure came. My patron inquired if I wished to go to Amatlan. I told him I did. He then ordered me a mule, and in four days we were on the way. Previous to starting, Don Jesus procured a bottle of aguadiente, unknown to Don Pedro, who, knowing the habits of his secretary, would have opposed this strenuously.

The country, for a part of the way, was settled; but most of it was wild, rough, and uninhabited Every little while the secretary would fall behin his employer and take a drink of the liquor, in whic I sometimes joined him, for the liquor was excellent The road was wild and gloomy, and I felt like a bird just let loose from a cage.

Our journey that day was eighteen leagues, and we did not arrive at our destined place until after dark. Just before reaching it I became separated from my friends, and as it was pitchy dark, I lost my way; I felt confident, however, that I was near the suburbs of the town, but where to go I knew not. I therefore resolved to trust to the instincts of the mule, and let him pursue the way he thought best, of course supposing that he would fetch up somewhere. After a few moments he stopped, and, for all I could do, he would not move another inch. I then dismounted to examine the ground, when I discovered that he had

stopped at the foot of a steep bluff, and one that he could not ascend. I searched for the path, but in vain. I then called lustily for help, and a man soon appeared. I told him my trouble; he put me in the road, and accompanied me to the alcalde's.

Here I found my friends, awaiting my arrival with some anxiety, and I also met several persons that I had seen at Iztlan. The alcalde was an old acquaintance, with whom I stayed. The next morning I took a view of the town. It is surrounded with high mountains, which are said to be full of valuable mines, but they are not worked: one, a gold mine, I visited in company with Don Jesus. It had not been worked for a great many years. It was about a hundred feet deep, and the vein was about as large as my finger. From the amount of metal it appeared to contain, I should think it might be worked to advantage; but the Mexicans are too indolent to do any thing with it further than to supply their most pressing wants, and hardly that.

I said that this mine is not worked, but I will state an exception to this remark. If a Mexican is sorely pressed for money, and can not raise it in any other way, he will take his drill, go to the mine, take one or two blasts, grind the rock, and separate the gold. In this operation he will frequently make two or three dollars a day. When again pressed with want, he will again resort to this laborious method of supplying his necessities. This is the full extent to which this or any other mine in this vicinity is worked. None seem to care for any thing above their present wants.

The town is situated in a sort of basin, and so low and small that a cool breeze is seldom felt. In addition to this, there is a hot spring close to one side of the village, and so warm that it will cook an egg in a few moments. The heat arising from this, together with the location, renders this one of the hottest places that I ever saw. But it is decidedly a fruit-growing place; cocoa-nuts, a fruit that I never saw growing before, are produced in great abundance. The trees are very tall and slender, tapering to a mere point. The fruit grows close to the top of the trunk. There are no limbs, and but few leaves.

With regard to the hot spring, different theories exist as to its cause. Some suppose that it is the action of different metals, others that a combination of acids and alkalis heats the water to its present degree. There is also a large creek passing through here, into which the hot water runs; and at the junction is an excellent place for bathing, the water being tempered to the proper degree of heat.

I have been often struck with the singularity of many of the names in Mexico. I here ascertained that they are of Indian origin. *Amatlan* is pure Indian, and signifies *the land of fruit; Etztlan* is *the land of roses*, and *Hicacatlan the land of fire*, there being a volcano near that city in active operation at the present time.

The little knowledge of medicine which I possessed was of the greatest advantage to me. I have been sent for a distance of five leagues to visit the sick, and liberally paid. Once I was called even a greater distance, to visit a man who had a cancer on his face.

It had grown to such a size that his whole face was completely disfigured; but for him there was no help for want of medicines. I could do nothing to speak of in any difficult case; yet the fact that they regarded me as a doctor insured me good treatment. I am thoroughly convinced that a physician might do a good business here. The pay is good; and in very few places only would he have any competition. He might have all to himself for a range of twenty leagues around him. The expenses of living are trifling; two shillings a day will pay one's board, and if he prefers keeping house, sixpence a day would be sufficient to pay for his provisions.

Having frequently mentioned alcaldes, I will now say something relative to the duties and responsibilities of that office, as I observed it in this town. I was now residing with the alcalde of this place, and had a good opportunity of observing them. He is both a justice of the peace and a judge. His decisions are nearly absolute, and subject only to the supervision of the supreme judge of the district. In criminal cases he generally passes sentence as he thinks proper, of confinement either in jail, or in the state prison, which is in this state at Guadalajara. While I was here, three were sent, under a strong escort, to the state prison. In very extraordinary cases, the prisoner has a regular trial, and is then sent to jail, when the alcalde sends a report of the trial and testimony to the first judge, who resides in Tepic. The latter pronounces sentence, which is carried into effect by the alcalde.

I will relate one instance that occurred under my

observation. A man entered a house, murdered a woman and two children, and cut the father of the children severely on the head with a sword. The murderer was arrested and brought before the alcalde. The case was then examined, when sufficient proof was found against him, and he was confined in jail. The wounded man was then inspected, to ascertain if his wound was dangerous. I was called on to do this duty. I soon ascertained that it was, under existing circumstances, likely to prove fatal, as no care whatever had been taken to dress it; and in so hot a climate, the chances were that he would never get well, and I gave my opinion accordingly. Several days were then occupied in making out a report, both as to the three murders, and the attempted murder of the fourth. With regard to the last, I signed my name as examining surgeon as to the dangerous nature of the wound; and, in fact, within two weeks, the poor man died. The report was sent to Tepic; but I did not remain long enough to hear the result of the affair.

Another instance of a different character will show the great power of the alcalde. A man was owing me for some professional services, and either would not or could not pay. I told the alcalde of it, and he wrote a letter commanding the debtor to come at once and pay me. The letter was given to a little boy to deliver, and the next morning early the man came and paid up, making all sorts of apologies for not having done so before.

When a person is sworn, the alcalde takes his staff of office and makes a cross with it. The person tak-

ing the oath does the same with his finger and thumb. By this cross he is sworn to tell "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." During this ceremony all in the court room rise.

At this time a man came into the place and reported the appearance of a band of robbers at a hacienda some two leagues distant. In consequence of this report, the inhabitants were greatly alarmed, and the alcalde ordered out thirty horsemen, well armed with lances, swords, and carbines. A horse was also provided for me, as I was anxious to join the enterprise, an adventure of this kind suiting my mind, because of the fun and excitement always attending them. I was furnished with a sword, a carbine, and a brace of pistols. In about an hour we were ready to start. We passed over the ground at top speed, and in little more than an hour arrived at the place where the robbers had been. Some of the buildings had been destroyed, and all plundered of every thing that was valuable. The cattle and horses also were taken off. But the miscreants were gone.

The inhabitants had fled at the first appearance of danger, and secreted themselves. When they saw us coming, they returned and informed us of the road the banditti had taken. Instant and vigorous pursuit was now ordered. They had about half an hour's start of us, but we were confident of overtaking them. Previous to starting from the village, our orders were to arrest all strangers that we found without a passport; for the law is such that any person must have one to pass even from one district to another, otherwise he is liable to be arrested as a thief.

We now pushed on with renewed vigor, and in about two hours we came in sight of them. They discovered us at the same time, and at once began to separate. They left a portion of the plunder that encumbered them the most, and made all haste to cross the mountains. The excitement now became intense, both with the pursuers and the pursued. We followed up the mountain some distance, when we succeeded in overtaking a portion of them. On our coming up, they made a stand and fired two rounds, wounding three of our men. We returned the fire, and charged on them at the same moment. They numbered about the same as we did; and the conflict was now with the sword. It was short and severe; but we succeeded in capturing them, four being killed on our part, and five wounded. The loss on theirs was nearly double that number. The rest of their party was by this time so far ahead of us that pursuit was impracticable. We therefore tied together with a rope those that we had taken, and returned with them, and the mules, and horses, and other effects that had been stolen. We searched the prisoners, and found some money, which we divided as lawful prize, amounting to some ten dollars each. We got back to Amatlan about sunset, and our captives were put in jail, where they remained till I left. What became of them afterward I know not. This band had been very troublesome for some time; but now it was effectually broken up, as the remainder gave no further trouble.

At this place I accidentally became acquainted with an American who holds a commission in the

Mexican army. As his history is singular, I will here insert it, premising that I do not vouch for its truth, but give it as he related it. He was formerly a miner in Wisconsin, where, in company with another man, he owned a valuable mine. Some difficulty occurred with a third person, in which he killed the latter. He then escaped as soon as possible, and went to Pittsburg. He remained there until he had exhausted his funds, when he served for some time as a hand on a steam-boat. To get still further away, he enlisted in the United States service, and went to Corpus Christi. Thence he deserted, and joined the Mexicans at Matamoros. He received a commission in their army, and was in nearly all the battles with the Americans, in which he invariably chewed the bitter cud of defeat. He was with General Urrea at the battle of Mariné, on the memorable 24th of February, when I was taken prisoner. Fortunately, he did not recognize me. He gave me some additional information relative to that capture, which, however, need not now be mentioned. Never yet have I felt so strong a desire to take life as I did this man's. The miscreant, after taking part in one of the most horrible massacres ever recorded, made a boast of what he had plundered and what he had done. He lives, a disgrace to himself and to his country. He has been amply rewarded by the Mexican government for his treachery; so, in fact, have all the deserters. Still, many of them are in a miserable condition, without money, clothes, or friends, and despised by every honorable man. Though the Mexicans may give them some little assistance, they heartily despise the

treachery that brought them to their present condition.

It was now the 24th of February, and I had been a prisoner one year. During that time I had seen a large portion of this country, and traveled upward of two thousand miles on foot. I had experienced almost every vicissitude of fortune that a man could well experience within so short a period of time; I had been at times feasted, and at times almost starved.

As an apology for my narrative being irregular, and often disconnected, I may observe that the circumstances under which I took my notes compelled me to be very brief, and to omit many things necessary to a regular narrative, which are now so much out of my mind that, as I can not clearly recall them, I am obliged to overlook them altogether. With this apology, I will proceed to describe their manner of conducting a school.

At Amatlan I was invited by the teacher to visit his school, and at the time appointed I went. On entering, all the scholars rose and gave me a sort of military salute. It numbered some fifty-seven scholars. They were all reading aloud when I went in; some had newspapers, some little pamphlets, but not one had a regular school-book. I was conducted to a seat, which was elevated above the floor. A segar was given me to smoke, in which the master joined. He then showed me the writing of the scholars, and also his own; and, in truth, I must say that, were it to save my life, I could not read it. It was no better than a scrawl made by a new beginner. He then got his arithmetic, and urged me to teach him, remark-

ing, at the same time, that he had gone no further than simple addition. I declined teaching him, urging as my reason that I was not a good arithmetician. When it was time to close the school, each boy was ordered up to read. On coming to his presence, every urchin would kneel down as to his God, and on his bended knees read his lesson, and then return to his seat. This was repeated till all had read, when the school closed. This manner of conducting a school is universal in this country. Let it not be understood, however, that all teachers are so supremely ignorant; far from it. Some are well-educated and intelligent men; but in remote places like this, almost any ignoramus is capable of teaching their school. They have colleges so munificently endowed by the government that the expenses of a collegiate course are very trifling; yet none but the sons of the rich can get access to them.

I now come to speak of their system of peonage. By a law of Mexico, slaves can not exist there, for the moment they touch Mexican soil, that moment they become free. But they have a system of slavery nearly as bad as that of the United States. If a man is so unfortunate as to become involved in debt, however small it may be, and can not pay it, he is obliged to serve the creditor until the sum is paid. By the adroit management of the latter, and the careless stupidity of the former, this is seldom done. When the interest is calculated, and the expenses of his living, clothing, &c., are added, it may readily be seen his slavery must often be hopeless, although it comes under another name. Nor does it end at his death;

for the children are bound by the father's debt, in addition to those they may accumulate for their own support, before they can earn it. They can not be bought and sold, but their debts may be bought, which is tantamount to buying the body. The only feature in which this is distinct from slavery is this: families can not be separated. If a peon is transferred to another person, his family goes with him.

I now wish to speak more fully of their habits of gambling. I witnessed more of it at Amatlan than at any other place. Their most common game is monte, whose mysteries can be learned only by losing at it. The coolness with which a Mexican will lose sum after sum is remarkable, their countenances never changing. Men, women, and children, as soon as they begin to talk, may be seen at the green-cloth table. I here saw the priests, dressed in their sacred robes, gamble with greasy rancheros. Sitting on the curb-stones and in the streets may be seen fellows dirty and almost naked, who have scraped together a few coppers, and are now dealing monte. I have seen men play till they had lost all their money, then gamble their blanket, then their hat, and even the shirt on their back. They would lose all these with apparently perfect and stoical indifference, when at the same time it was probably the last they had. In this manner I have seen a shirt change owners three times in one day.

The character of the Mexicans may be seen at a glance when I say that, morally, it is on a level with the foregoing in every thing, and this is not wonderful; they are not so much to blame, when we consider the example set them by their priests.

Their fandangoes is another thing worthy of notice. Whenever one is decided on, they engage the music, and fire a few rockets, which is equivalent to a general invitation, when old and young flock to the house of dancing. Should this be small, the fandango is held in the yard. A gentleman selects his partner and goes on the floor; liquor is then handed them, of which they drink, and pass it round to all hands. The music then commences, and the dancers step it, not in "the light, fantastic toe" style, but like a regular negro hoe-down, each one trying to excel the other in making the most noise. This is continued till near morning, when all return to their homes, all more or less intoxicated, some beastly, others decently, and others gentlemanly.

At one of these fandangoes my life was put in some danger. It occurred as follows: A young man was there with his wife, a very pretty girl. I danced with her once, and after that sat down by her side to have a little chat. This made the husband jealous; and as he was drunk, he acted without reason. He went home, got his sword, and came back, avowing his determination of killing me, saying that, as to having a Yankee dance with his wife, he would not suffer it. Some one told me of his intentions, and that he was then in the yard, waiting for me to pass out, when he would attack me. I gave them some money to treat him to all he would drink, and paid no more attention to it. When the party broke up, he was so drunk that he could not possibly do me any hurt. But this was not the end of the affair, for he had been very much excited, and now resolved on revenge. In or-

der to obtain it, he carried his sword for several days, in the hopes of having a chance of attacking me unawares. But I carried one also; and, so long as I was on my guard, he durst not molest me. In a few days his ire appeared to have cooled.

At this time occurred the great celebration of the Carnival. They go round at night, breaking egg-shells on the heads of persons. These are filled with flour, and scented with Cologne, or rose water, or some other rich odor. When it commenced I was standing in the street, idling away the time as best I could, when, all of a sudden, my hat was removed, and a number of these odious shells were broken on my devoted head. Not being aware of the custom, I quickly turned, and, before I was aware of it, had knocked down the man who was guilty of what I considered this insult. A tumult was raised; they threatened to kill me, and perhaps would have done so, had not some one gone after the alcalde. He came and inquired into the matter, then ordered them to let me alone for the future, and took me back to his house. Were it not for my friend Don Jesus Murguir, and the alcalde, I fear I would not have been long in this world; but when I was in difficulty, right or wrong, I was sure of their protection.

This diversion is practiced several nights in succession, varied occasionally by throwing flour in persons' faces. It is followed by the religious season of Lent, which continues forty days; and it is the custom throughout Mexico to have mass, or at least religious service, every morning during all that time. When the festival commenced, the people assembled as usual

in the morning. When they came out of church, I noticed, with some curiosity, that all the people had a cross painted on their foreheads. For what purpose this was done, I could not ascertain. This they wore for one week; and then commenced the processions. One morning I resolved to observe one of these closely, to see all that could be seen. The procession formed in the suburbs of the town, so thither I went. On coming up, I saw the priest mounting a donkey, richly caparisoned, and led by two boys. The streets were strewed with flowers, evergreens, and the finest blankets. This, I suppose, was intended to represent the entry of Christ into Jerusalem. They were attended with music, banners were flying, and rockets were fired. They went through the principal streets, then turned up to the church; but, as they were going through the Plaza, some other donkeys commenced braying, when the one that was rode by the representative of Christ answered it, and started off, notwithstanding the exertions of the boys to prevent him. When he found he had some difficulty in getting away, he began to kick and plunge, and, finally, he threw his priestship off. This scene was so comical and ridiculous, that, had it broken his neck, I could not have avoided smiling, and laughing when I had a better chance. Not so with them, however, for not a smile could be seen on a single face. People were coming in from all parts of the country to witness the ceremonies and to confess, this being the time for a general confession.

At this time I was invited by a gentleman to visit one of his gold mines some ten leagues distant. Our

route was entirely in the mountains, and the scenery was occasionally sublime. Along the sides of the mountains, the path was so narrow that the mule scarcely had room to plant his feet. On one side of us rose a precipice, almost perpendicular, to a great height; on the other side was a dark and unfathomable abyss. About four in the afternoon we came to the Barranca, so named from the fact of its being built in a gulley.

We stopped at the house of a friend. A servant took charge of our beasts, and we were invited to the house. I was soon on familiar terms with the inmates, whom I found far superior to their condition; their manners, intelligence, and the arrangements of their house all bespoke them as belonging to a class superior to those around them. There was in the family a young lady, more beautiful and refined than any I had yet seen in this country, with piercing black eyes, soft auburn hair, and a complexion perfectly white, and an eminently fine form. There was about her a dignity and charming simplicity which rendered her irresistible. A cup of chocolate was given us as a lunch, when the young lady invited me to go into the garden to see her flowers and eat some fruit. This invitation I of course would not refuse. I scarcely believed she was a Mexican, so different was she from the rest of my acquaintances. In the management of her garden I admired her taste as much as her person. So anxious was I to ascertain the history of her family, that I could not restrain from asking if they had always lived here. She said not; and as I appeared to be anxious to learn it, she related the following facts.

Her father had once been rich, and held the commission of general in the army. In some revolution he was deprived of his commission, and his property was confiscated to government. He then moved his family to this retired and secluded spot, and was now engaged in mining operations. We were now called into the house, and during the evening the young lady and her mother played on the harp and guitar, accompanied with their voices. They showed plainly that, whatever their opportunities might have been, they had not been neglected.

Next morning we arose and departed early. Our ride to-day was short, for we came to the mine in two hours. It had been worked to the depth of four hundred feet, and produced, on an average, three ounces per day. I was told it had been worked over a century. The owner employed, in all his operations in this mine, some sixty men, to whom he paid two and three shillings per day. His major-domo, or chief director and overseer, received five hundred dollars per annum. Great caution and watchfulness was requisite to prevent the Mexicans from stealing any of the metal. Toward night we returned to the Barranca, where we arrived soon after dark, and which we left early next morning. After I was in the saddle, the young lady before spoken of came and presented me with a bottle of good wine, remarking that, when I was far away, I must not forget her. We returned by the same route that we had come, and arrived at home about dusk.

This gentleman lived at Garabato, five leagues distant. He encouraged me with hopes of getting in

profitable business in his mine if I would come and live with him. Supposing that the offer was made in good faith, I accepted it. He told me that his overseer was going to leave. This situation I should have accepted, with the object of obtaining money sufficient to carry me home, and, if I was lucky, of remaining till I had accumulated a small pile.

I now bid adieu to my friends in Amatlan, and went to Garabato, where I remained three months. Soon after coming here I found that the offer which had been made me was a mere bubble; the man had no intention whatever of fulfilling his promises.

Garabato is not so large as Amatlan, nor is it so compactly built. The houses were originally built just where it suited their owners, regardless of regularity or order; consequently, the streets are narrow and very crooked, but the country around is fertile and well cultivated, and fruit is raised with great care. A church stands in what they call the square; but, strange to tell, there is no priest in the place. This is a circumstance that I never before observed, even in a small place, and the only solution I could give to the enigma was, that the people were not devout enough to support a priest. Many of the wealthiest informed me that they had not confessed for a great many years, neither had they paid their tithes to the bishop, and their example was followed by the poorer classes. The result of this course was a great falling off in the influence of the priests. The people in general are rather remiss in observing their religious fasts and festivals, and showing, in a manner not to be misunderstood, that the influence of their

great father the pope is utterly lost. During the season of Lent, when in other places they were holding celebrations, and fandangoes were prohibited, here amusements of every kind were freely engaged in.

An incident worthy of note occurred at this time. Some of the people wanted a fandango, and it was necessary for them to get a license from the alcalde; but he, on account of its being a time of festival, refused to give one. This was on Saturday. A report of his refusal was made to Antonio Parra, the gentleman with whom I was then residing. On Sunday he went to his highness and demanded a license; it was again refused. He then called together the ayuntamiento, or common council, and demanded one. His wealth was greater than that of any other man in the place, and, consequently, his influence was greater than even the alcalde's; so the council gave him one without delay. This was early in the morning; rockets were at once fired; the music was got together, and they took the rounds of the village, going first to the alcalde's office, and then to his house, as a mark of triumph and contempt. A barrel of liquor was now brought into the street, and the head knocked in; then all came up and drank, men and women, boys and girls, and in a short time almost the entire town was completely drunk.

The music now went back to the house of the alcalde, when Antonio Parra and this officer fell into a fight. A rush was made on both sides, and the fight became general. An attempt was made by the friends of the alcalde to carry Parra to jail; but he had a great many friends, and to succeed was impossible.

This was the first and last instance in which I ever saw the alcalde's authority directly and successfully resisted. During the whole day and night shouts were heard in favor of Antonio Parra forever. The authority of the alcalde in this place was scarcely regarded. An appeal from him to Parra was generally successful.

I at this place became experimentally acquainted with an animal which is held in great dread by the Mexicans, who call it *alacran*. In English it is scorpion. I was one evening sitting in the door of a house, when I felt something running up my leg under my clothes. Not thinking what it was, I put my hand on it to push it down again, when it stung me just below the knee. The poison was rapidly communicated to my whole body. I experienced a pricking and deadening sort of pain, and felt as though ten thousand fine needles were sticking in my body. My system was, in a great measure, deprived of the power of action. I tried to bleed myself by inserting my penknife in the place that was stung; but no blood appeared, only a little water of a greenish color. I then drank about half a pint of liquor, and, strange to say, it had not the least effect in producing intoxication, as I had hoped, but it lessened the pain considerably.

During the whole night it was impossible for me to sleep. I rolled from side to side in perfect agony. A raging thirst now tormented me. I tried to walk, but could scarcely stand. At length I heard some one stirring, when I crawled to my door, and called for some water. It was brought me; and when I

drank, my throat felt as though it was full of fine long hair, for at every draught that I took the hair seemed to rise on the water and completely choke me. For two or three days I was in great danger, but at the end of the sixth I was entirely well.

CHAPTER XII.

Being deceived a second time, I start for Tepic with Secretary Muirguir.—Ojala.—Common mode of Spinning.—Ahuacatlan.—Account of a Volcano.—Frequency of Robberies.—I am taken Sick.—Arrive at Tepic.—Long confined with a Fever.—Good Offices of Mr. Whiting and other Countrymen.—Mineral Resources of Mexico.—Abundance of Gold. — Agricultural Resources. — Farming Implements. — Advantages of Mexico for Manufacturing. — Climate. — Summary of the Condition of Mexico. — Journey to San Blas. — Musquitoes.—Condition of the Town.—Go on board the United States ship Lexington.—Sail for the United States in the Cyane. —Usages on board a Man-of-war.—Religious Exercises and Instruction.—Hard Subjects.—Valparaiso.—A singular Race.—Arrive in the United States.

I now became thoroughly convinced that it was not the intention of Antonio Parra to perform a single one of his promises to me. I had been so often deceived by him and others that I had no confidence whatever in their word. In fact, where they are not bound to its fulfillment by a pecuniary consideration, it never need be expected that they will do as they ~~say~~. Honor with them is a principle that has become obsolete; they have no more idea of the value of their word of honor than a horse has of gold. I therefore determined to go to Tepic, and accordingly borrowed a horse and saddle of my kind host to go to Amatlan for three or four days. I knew that my friend, Jesus Muirguir, intended to go soon, and it was my intention to go with him, and keep this horse

till I got to Tepic. The manner in which I had been deceived justified me in so doing.

Having gone to Amatlan, and made arrangements with my friend, we started the third day in the evening. We chose the evening because it was cooler traveling. Being obliged to cross the mountains, we followed a gulley for some distance, during which time we crossed a stream seventy times. The next morning, about break of day, we came to Iztlan, the place whence I had started the fall before with Don Pedro Martinez. Here we remained two days, and again started at night for Tepic.

On this night's tramp we lost our way, and wandered round for some time, but could not find it. We then tied our horses to the fence, rolled ourselves in our blankets, and went to sleep. Next morning we resumed our search for the road, but for a long time were unsuccessful. At last we espied a man on horseback, and hailed him; but he did not answer us, doubtless supposing us to be robbers. I then rode after him. He increased his speed, anxious to keep out of our reach; but at last I overtook him, and inquired the road to Ojala, the place whither we were going. He pointed it out to me, and we then pursued our journey. In two hours we arrived at the place of our destination, and went to the house of a friend, where we remained two days.

Here are two villages close together. One is inhabited entirely by Indians. The houses are built in the Indian style; but they have a beautiful church. The other one is a large and well-built town, containing three large churches. The surrounding coun-

try is very beautiful. For miles around it is perfectly level, and not a weed nor bush is to be seen. The mountains are full of mineral wealth; but a great want of enterprise is apparent in all parts of this country.

To commence farming operations in Mexico great capital is not needed. Labor is cheap; working cattle may be bought for thirty or forty dollars, and cows from four to ten dollars each, while all kinds of produce bear a good price. Good land may be had at very low prices. Near this village land may be bought for twenty dollars an acre, which, in the United States, would, under the same circumstances, cost from seventy-five to one hundred dollars. Mexico has also every facility to make it one of the best manufacturing countries, both of woolen and cotton goods. Of the latter there are several already in operation. The raw material is brought from the United States and South America, very little cotton being raised in Mexico; but any quantity might be raised, if they had enterprise enough to introduce and attend to it. Their usual manner of making thread is very old-fashioned. They have no spinning-wheels, but, as a substitute, they use a long, slender spindle, which they dextrously whirl in a common saucer. While it is whirling, they spin out the required quantity, which is twisted into a fine, even, and hard thread. When the spindle has lost its impetus, they whirl it again with the thumb and finger, as a boy would whirl his top. This is a slow method, but it is the only one in general use among the Mexicans. I question very much if a Yankee would have been long

contented with this slow process of making so important an article as thread.

We remained in Ojala two days, when we started again and traveled to Ahuacatlan. This I found to be a large and well-built town. It was Sunday, and the streets and Plaza were full of people; here we stayed till noon, and on going into the yard to get our horses, I found that mine had been stolen. I made inquiries, but no one knew any thing about him; so I started on foot, changing alternately with Don Jesus, who still had his horse in possession.

Near Ahuacatlan we passed a volcano. Volumes of dense black smoke ascended therefrom, and it occasionally roared a little, just to let the inhabitants know that it was still alive, yet it was comparatively quiet to what it had been in former times. Earthquakes are very frequent, and I experienced several shocks; but as no houses tumbled down, nor was any material damage done, I have not thought it worth while to mention them. I was told that at times this volcano threw up large rocks and lava in abundance; and a little further on I saw evidence of the devastations it had committed. Before us lay what had once been a beautiful valley; but now it was buried some thirty feet under lava, thrown out during some terrible eruption. This lava field extended in some directions as far as the eye could penetrate, and was about two miles wide. The surface was hard and craggy, and so sharp that it was impossible to walk over it. A road had been made over it by hammering down the sharp points, just wide enough for a coach to pass; and it was now worn

smooth. The scene was one of the wildest and bleakest that I ever saw. I now, for the first time in my life, had seen an active volcano, and its terrible effects. Much as I admire all that is beautiful and grand in creation, I desire to see no more scenes like this. I could not think that I was out of danger so long as I was in its vicinity.

We hastened on as fast as possible, intending to reach San Isabel that night. That afternoon we overtook a man with whom my comrade was acquainted, who also was going to Tepic. This was a welcome addition to our number, as the road was said to be infested with robbers. This word is of very common occurrence in the speech of this country. A Mexican can not go from home and return without being asked, "Did you meet any robbers?" A man can hardly lie down at night without apprehension of danger. And, in short, they are kept in such continual fear of danger, real or imaginary, that life with them is hardly a blessing.

In this instance the report did not prove to be false; for, as I was traveling ahead of my companions, I met two men in a thick part of the woods, who were mounted on two splendid horses. They seemed to have just darted out of the bushes, for they rode up to me with all speed, one on each side. Knowing that help would soon come, I made all the resistance I could. I picked up a large stone, threw it with all my force, and hit one of the men on the face. This staggered him a moment; but he soon recovered, and was about commencing other operations, as I could see by his getting his lasso ready to throw, when, on

looking up, they saw my comrades coming round a turn in the road. They then made off with all speed into the chapparal. After this I was more careful to keep closer to them.

We came to San Isabel some time after dark. It is but a large rancho, and presents nothing worthy of note. The next morning we made an early start, and that day suffered a good deal for want of water, of which there was a great scarcity; and the ranchos were "few and far between."

Toward night we again lost our way; and after wandering about some time in hopes of discovering the path, we saw a house just at the bottom of a hill, where we remained till the next morning. We were then only about eight leagues from Tepic, and made an early start, wishing to get there before night. When about two leagues from the city I was taken sick, but I did not give up until I had got within a mile and a half of that place. Being unable to go further, I went into a house and obtained permission to lie down for a while, my fellow-traveler promising to return before night with another horse and bring me in. I was attacked with a raging fever. The house in which I was resting was alone, and far from any other; and when I went in, it was occupied only by women. From them I received every attention; but some time after a man came in, who I thought was somewhat the worse for liquor. He urged me to drink with him; and as I could not, he began to abuse me. Then he tried to force some down. This kind of attention in my then state was any thing but agreeable. The women took pity on

me, and tried to make him leave me; but he became exasperated, drove them out of the room, then dragged me out, and there left me. I had just strength enough to crawl under the fence, and there I remained I know not how long.

After some time a Mexican gentleman came along, who, seeing me in that condition, inquired of the women in the house what the matter was. They told him, and also the treatment that I had received. He took pity on me, put me on his horse, and started on to Tepic. Just before entering the city I met Muirguir coming out with another horse after me.

I was taken to a meson, in a room of which I was left perfectly helpless. There was some great excitement in the city, and they were there the whole time, while I was alone, burning with a raging fever, and parched with thirst. If I wanted any thing, I was forced either to wait for them to come in, or to take my shoe and rap on the side wall of the room. Sometimes I was heard, and sometimes not. In this way two long and miserable days passed by, during which I suffered much for want of water. At the end of this time I called a boy into the room and offered him two shillings to bring an American to see me. He was gone about an hour, when he came back, and a gentleman along with him. I inquired if he was an American. He said he was. I then told him of my situation, my captivity, escape, wishes, &c. He at once ordered some tea and other things to be given me, and presented me with two dollars. He then left, promising to return the next morning with another gentleman, when they would do some-

thing of a more permanent nature for me. That night my fever abated, and I slept well. The next morning the two gentlemen came again to see me; and as I was still unable to support myself, they had me carried to the factory, where the director, whose name is John Whiting, hired my board, for which he paid three dollars per week. During part of the time he employed a nurse, and also got a doctor to visit me. I was on his hands a little more than six weeks.

While I was here, Lieutenant Beal, of the navy, of whom so much has been said, visited the factory. He was then on his journey across the country to Mexico.

As soon as I was able to mount a horse, it was thought best for me to go to San Blas, distant sixty miles. The United States ship Lexington was then stationed there, and was to leave in a few days. To Captain Bailey, of that ship, I had letters of recommendation and introduction from Captain Basil, of Tepic. A horse was furnished me, and a servant was sent along to take care of me and bring the horse back. Previous to starting, a purse of twenty dollars was made up for me.

The next morning, June 6th, I bid adieu to my kind friends. This was a hard task. I was a perfect stranger, yet they treated me as they would a brother. Mr. Whiting's expenses, on my account, could not have been less than fifty dollars. I had no claims on them further than those of humanity; but they fed me, clothed me, and when I was sick, ministered to my wants. What more could they have done? I feel perfectly satisfied that, had I not

fallen into their hands, I should not now be alive. My long exposures, and various fatigues and sufferings, had completely broken down my constitution, and even at this day I have by no means entirely recovered; but the prompt medical attendance that was procured me arrested the disease and saved my life. The consciousness that this is the case must be their reward. I am only sorry that I can not show my gratitude in a more tangible form.

Before resuming my regular subject, I shall make a few final remarks relative to the appearance and resources of this country. It is mostly very mountainous. Look where you will, lofty mountains meet the eye; these are full of many and valuable mines, some of which are worked, others not. Valuable mines are frequently discovered that were formerly worked, and stopped up at the commencement of the revolution. The earth that was banked up over the mouth caves in, and discovers to the passer-by a very valuable mine. It is well known that, before the revolutionary war, many valuable mines were worked whose locations are not now known; the entrances had been covered over, and all knowledge of their existence had passed away; but these are gradually rediscovered as the embankments cave in, and some of them are now worked to great advantage.

Gold is found in considerable quantities in the arroyos, having been washed there during the rainy season. This was discovered in the following manner: A shepherd was on the mountains tending sheep, when, coming to one of these arroyos, he discovered several bright yellow particles; this exciting his cu-

riosity, he gathered up some of the sand, washed it out, and then found that he had gathered several dollars' worth of gold. He kept this discovery a secret, and continued digging and washing. Some days he would get from forty to sixty dollars, and finally he had obtained some five hundred dollars before it was found out where he got it. When the secret was discovered, the people all flocked to the mountains, and the arroyos were filled with gold-hunters. For a while they were successful, averaging from two to three dollars a day. But the gold after a while became exhausted; and as they searched no further, they gave it up until the next rainy season, when they again resorted to the mountains.

The above information I derived from the American residents of Tepic. It was their opinion that gold might be found in great abundance in the river bottoms, and on all lands that are overflowed by the water from the mountains during the rainy season, the same as it is now found in California. In my humble opinion, the vicinity of Tepic might be a better place to go to with a view of digging gold. The climate is as healthy as that of California, while clothing and the expenses of living are at least more than one half cheaper. Had I not been so completely broken down in health, I should have remained here a while to test the value of my faith in these deposites.

The Mexicans, I was informed, never ascend the mountain very high, and search out only where they can dig out loose sand, which they wash; but in some of the valleys it was known that the soil has accumulated from one to three feet by the wash from the

mountains. This might afford a rich return to the laborer. Or rich veins might be discovered by going up the mountains, as the existence of gold there is fully proved by the rich deposits it annually sends to the valleys beneath.

This mineral wealth is not confined to the vicinity of Tepic, for in most of the mountains of Mexico mines of either gold, silver, or copper have been discovered. More has been found out by accident than as the reward of a persevering search. It is often the case, during the dry season, that a fire breaks out on the mountains, and burns off all the vegetable matter, leaving the rocks perfectly bare; then, if any one has industry and perseverance enough to make a search, he is generally richly rewarded.

Another great yet neglected resource of Mexico is its agriculture. Much of its surface is indeed unfit for tillage; yet even that which is not is greatly neglected. Their agricultural implements are few, and are, I should think, much the same as our great grandsire Adam constructed. They yoke their oxen together by means of a straight stick of wood, which is firmly tied to their horns with a long strip of raw hide cut up for that purpose. Their plow is generally nothing more than a stick of wood pointed at one end, though sometimes it is pointed with iron. This is about two and a half or three feet in length. From the end of this rises another upright stick, used for a handle. Where this handle is attached to the plow, there is also fastened a long pole, which is fixed to the yoke. This simple apparatus serves the double purpose of a plow and a harrow. All the rest of

their implements are equally rude and inefficient. By means of these they manage to eke out an existence; but I venture to say that they do not obtain from the land one quarter of the produce which it would yield if it were in skillful hands and under a stable government. With proper attention to the seasons, and more thorough working and manuring, an abundance might be raised for exportation; and as produce commands a good price, a farmer might soon realize a handsome fortune.

Another great resource of Mexico is its manufacturing advantages. There are several cotton factories already in operation; and, from the prices their fabrics command, they are making an immense fortune. But many more are wanted; and, in addition to these, woolen factories are much needed. An abundance of water power is yet unoccupied; and wool may be had in abundance at a cheap rate. Sheep may be raised in any quantities at a comparatively trifling expense. Cattle can be raised to great advantage; and the making of butter and cheese might be a source of great profit.

The climate of Mexico is not, as a general thing, unhealthy. It is so only on the sea-coast and low lands; but as you ascend the table lands in the interior, the atmosphere becomes cool, pure, and bracing. This part of Mexico is, in my opinion, as healthy as any country in the world.

Who is to have the honor of developing the resources of Mexico? That this will never be fully done under the present rule, past history too plainly shows. It will evidently be those who, at some fu-

ture time, will give law and a stable government to that now distracted country. Whoever will do so may reap ample rewards from their rich fields and valuable mines. What Mexico is now, California was; what it now is, Mexico would be, if it were under a similar government. It has all the advantages of California, with but few of its disadvantages. It is further removed from the frontier, and is less subject to incursions from hostile Indians. Added to this, the country is more densely peopled, and affords a good market for all kinds of productions.

To sum up the character of Mexico. In natural resources she is one of the richest countries in the world, and yet she is actually one of the poorest. She has a very rich soil, but it is miserably cultivated. She has nominally a most liberal government, yet it is actually quite despotic. Her people are apparently very devout and religious, yet they are extremely deficient on the score of morality and honor. She has many seminaries of learning very munificently endowed, yet the masses are nearly as ignorant as savages.

With these remarks I take my leave of Mexico. If I have made any misstatements, they are the result of wrong information; for I have taken great care to write nothing except what I either saw or received from what I might consider good authority. I will now resume my narrative at the place where I left off.

I had started for San Blas. Our road the first day was dreary enough; we were all the time passing high hills and deep valleys. The country around, so

far as the eye could reach, was at times a dreary and uninhabited waste. The soil was mostly fertile, but the climate is very unhealthy.

That day I was able to go only half of the way, and about three o'clock I stopped at a large rancho. The weather had been exceedingly hot, but the night was still warmer. Added to this, the musquitoes almost drove me crazy. Speak of the musquitoes of Michigan or Arkansas as large and savage! It may all be; but those that troubled me at this place beat them to nothing. When I found that there was no sleep, I started to smoke them away; but all would not do. They had smelled the blood of a Yankee, and they were determined to have it. I then thought that if there was no rest here I might as well go on; so the servant got the horse ready, and I mounted and started, it being about three o'clock in the morning.

My guide was not well acquainted with the road, it being a new one, and the consequence was, we lost our way. In trying to find it we got into a quagmire, which detained us more than two hours; yet daylight did not appear. At last we got out, and found a path, which we took, and soon came to a house. Here was a river to cross, and the bridge had been swept away by a flood; so we could not cross till daylight. At this place the musquitoes troubled us worse than where we had stayed part of the night; but we built a fire and sat in the smoke, and this partly relieved us from their kind attentions.

At last we could see the gray streaks of morn appearing; and soon a man came up to us, and point-

ed to a ford a little above us, where we could cross. He said that we had come just half way to San Blas. We got a breakfast, and started on over a level road. The water was a little brackish; and on passing to within ten miles of the sea, the land appears to have been overflowed by it. A white incrustation covered nearly all the surface of the ground. For some distance the road was built up about three feet above the level of the water; otherwise it would not have been passable. And it was the most crooked road imaginable, being made so to suit the whims of the most winding river in the world.

When we came in sight of the town, it appeared from this side like the ruins of some ancient castle, situated on a high hill. We soon entered it, and found that it was almost as ruinous as it looked when we first came in sight. It was regularly laid out, and had once been of considerable importance, being the only sea-port for that portion of Mexico, and possessing considerable commerce. But at the present time it is nearly deserted, and many of its public buildings are a mass of ruins. Complete solitude appeared to reign throughout the place.

I rested a few moments in a building that was formerly occupied by the British consul. The staff was still standing on which once waved proud Britain's haughty flag. But I was anxious to go aboard of the ship, so I took my things and went down to the landing on foot. The distance was over half a mile; and when I got there, I was completely exhausted. I soon made arrangements with a Mexican to take me on board, for which I gave him one dollar.

We had a long, narrow canal-boat, in which he placed a chair for me to sit. The boat rocked and tipped, and I was afraid that in so frail a craft it was dangerous to go out of the harbor, as there was a considerable sea running; but the pilot said nothing, and I did not. When we got out into the ocean, however, the waves rolled so high that the water flowed into the boat. This alarmed the boatman as well as myself, and he was desirous to go back. This was as dangerous as to go on. So I ordered him on, and took a cup and bailed out the water as fast as it came in.

In about an hour we came alongside of the ship. As I was too weak to climb up, a rope was lowered to me, which I tied round under my arms. They then hauled me on board, and I was again free. I requested to see the captain, and was conducted to his cabin. I gave him my letter, and after reading it, he asked me several questions relative to my fare while in Mexico, &c., and promised to send me home in the first vessel that went. This was on Tuesday, the 7th of June, 1848.

The next day they hoisted anchor, and set sail for Mazatlan. Just as we came in sight of this place we met another vessel, which they made out to be the Cyane, which was bound home. The Lexington then went back to San Blas and anchored, and the Cyane did the same. Captain Bailey then went on board of her; and just as he was starting, I begged him, if possible, to engage a passage for me home. To this he pledged himself. He soon returned, but brought me no encouragement. He said that Cap-

tain Dupont, of the Cyane, would come on board the Lexington in the afternoon, and give me an answer. My anxiety was indescribable. Home! home! was what I mostly cared for. The surgeon of the Lexington advised me not to go, as my health was such that it was doubtful whether I would live to reach the States. To this I answered that I would go at all hazards; and if permission was given me to do so, no consideration would induce me to forego the opportunity. Whence this strong attachment to home? I had been a wanderer "o'er the world's wide waste," and experienced every vicissitude that a man could well experience; and now, when I thought my thread of life was nearly run, it was the earnest desire of my heart to die near my native home, if I was destined to see its hills and valleys no more.

In the afternoon Captain Dupont came on board, and I was called up before him. He asked me when and where I was captured, the reasons for making my escape, &c., to which I answered satisfactorily. He then asked if I was anxious to go home. To this I replied, that if he had been in captivity as long, and suffered as much as I had suffered, and should finally make his escape, I believe he would also be anxious to go home the first opportunity. At this he smiled, and said that I might go. These words fairly made my heart leap to my mouth. No criminal condemned to death could have heard of his reprieve when on the scaffold with greater joy than I did these words of Captain Dupont. Had I been possessed of thousands, in the fullness of my gratitude I would have given it all to him. There was a sailor,

whose term of service had expired, who was also going on board.

The next day we left the Lexington and went on board the Cyane. Just as we were over the bulwarks, the first lieutenant met us with a paper in his hand, and told the sailor to follow him to the capstan. Not knowing any better, I went also. The lieutenant eyed me sharply for some time, and then, in tones that I suppose were intended to sink me into nothing, asked, "Who are you?" I answered, in tones equally important, "A soldier, sir." "Where are you from?" "The ship Lexington." "Who sent you here?" "Captain Bailey." Then, in still louder tones, he asked, "Where in h—l are you going to?" "The United States, sir. Any more questions to ask?" He then looked on the paper which had been sent from the other ship with the names of the passengers, and, seeing mine, he told me to go forward. I now knew that, by treating a man of his rank with so little deference, I had made him my enemy; for there is nothing that most naval officers will resent more quickly in their inferiors than neglecting to appear before them with abject submission.

Of the customs of a man-of-war I at the time was ignorant; and I never yet learned to treat an officer, whatever might be his rank, as any thing but an equal. All that I apprehended from the first lieutenant was a few petty annoyances, which he, in a vindictive spirit, might cause me. As for inflicting any corporal punishment, I knew he durst not, as I was only a passenger.

I was assigned to a mess, and soon made myself as comfortable as was possible in such a crowd. Of the crew there were two hundred and twenty, besides the officers. The ship was taking in provisions and water preparatory to setting sail. Here every thing was new to me, and I seemed to be always in the way. Go where I would, I could remain but a few moments before some one would come along and ask me to move. I then went below; but here, too, all was confusion and hurry. I managed, however, to get acquainted with the sailors, and while conversing with them I was not annoyed, for they saw when I would be in the way, and warned me to remove in time.

In two days more all was ready; the anchor was hoisted, sails set, and San Blas was fast disappearing. On one side was the vast expanse of the Pacific, and on the other a low blue streak marked the shore; even this at last disappeared. I soon became quite familiar with things around me. The boatswain's shrill whistle I soon understood, and the piping up of the watches, instead of causing me to start from my hammock, would tell me the hour of the night.

On first coming on board this ship I was struck with surprise on seeing such unlimited and absolute power given into the hands of a single individual as there is to the commander of a man-of-war. Some use this power with moderation, while others have rendered themselves perfectly odious to the crew by their tyranny. The ship is their kingdom, and over it they rule with absolute sway. The men are some-

times looked upon as brutes, and treated accordingly. Should any of them be so unfortunate as to tread on a young midshipman's toe, he is at once reported to the captain as having been guilty of treating his superior officer with disrespect. Soon after the boatswain's shrill whistle is heard, and a call for "*All hands ahoy to witness punishment.*" There stands the captain and his officers. The former, clothed with supreme authority, tells the culprit the nature of his crime; no chance for explanation or apology is given, and if any is attempted he is cut short by the order to strip. This being done, his feet are lashed to the gratings, and his hands tied to the gun. Just behind him stands the master at arms, whose duty it is to count, in a loud voice, the number of blows; and at the side stands the boatswain's mate, with the instrument of punishment in his hands. At the words "Do your duty, sir," he carefully draws the cords through his fingers to keep them straight, slowly raises his hand on high, and then rapidly, and with fearful effect, deals the torturing blows. By the time the allotted dozen are inflicted, the back is fairly cut in pieces. The offense for looking cross-wise at a midshipman and throwing him overboard is about the same, so far as the punishment is concerned.

On Sundays, when it is pleasant, all hands are required to dress themselves in their best clothes, and at a certain hour they are called up on deck, when the captain, if there is no chaplain on board, says prayers. Then he appears as pious as an old Dutch minister; but perhaps, within fifteen minutes after, he will be swearing at some of the sailors and flog-

ging others. The religious instruction of these men generally amounts to this: "Honor and obey the officers of thy ship, and next to them thy God, and thou shalt escape punishment."

Nothing worthy of note occurred until the night of the 4th of July, when some of the sailors contrived to get some liquor, and got about three sheets in the wind. One of the midshipmen was coming forward, toward whom the sailors bore a mortal grudge, when all at once an iron belaying-pin was hurled at his head, which just grazed his cheek. He turned and quickly went below, where he stayed the remainder of the night. To explain this, I will give a little of this young man's history, which will at once show what his character was, and how it followed him. He had been on the Pacific station nine years without once coming home. Thrice he had made the attempt. The first time he came as far as some of the West India islands; but such was his cruelty to the crew that they swore he never should reach home. This alarmed him, and he was transferred to another ship, in which he went back on the Pacific without being examined, as was his intention. He remained there three years more, and again started home for examination. He came to Rio Janeiro, but durst proceed no further, on account of the ill will of the crew. Here he met another ship outward bound, to which he was transferred, and again he went back to the Pacific, and remained there three years longer; he then came on board our ship as a passenger. But his reputation had preceded him, and the sailors omitted no opportunity of annoying him in every possible

manner. This, however, was the only instance in which they attempted violence. By keeping perfectly quiet, he now came home safe.

The second lieutenant was another such character. While on that coast, a sailor whom he had caused to be flogged seized him round the waist and jumped overboard, determined to be the death of him, even though he sacrificed his own life.

Such instances are not very rare, but they are carefully kept from the knowledge of the public. With regard to this assault on the middy, no notice was taken of it until our arrival at Valparaiso, where we arrived one Sunday morning about the last of July. Then the sailors were anxious to go on shore on liberty. For several days no notice was taken of their applications. At last the captain called the crew aft, and related this circumstance. He then said that if the authors of this attempt were made known, he would give them the desired liberty. This was touching a sailor in a tender point. It required them to betray their comrade to certain punishment. An obstinate silence was all the response the captain received. He had required what a sailor never would grant, namely, the betrayal of his comrade. They would sooner have died. At last, as nothing could be gained from them, the captain gave one half of the crew liberty for one day. The other half were to take it the next. When they came on board again, they were, for some trivial offense, put into the brig until the next morning. Then they were called up to receive punishment. Nineteen were thus punished at one time.

I did not go ashore with the sailors, but went in company with Sergeant Sheppard, of the marines. The city was larger and more beautiful than I had any reason to expect from its appearance from the ship. It is almost entirely built on the hills, there being very little space round the harbor. As this city has been often described, I will give only a few brief notices. Its situation is very singular, being on the ascent of the hills, or tops, as the sailors call them. Every top has its particular name, and is very steep. Most of them are formed by means of steps the whole distance. The city is not regularly laid out in squares, but there is great uniformity in the buildings, which present a fine appearance. Their police is all mounted on horses, and armed with a sword and pistols. They may be found in every street, and in every part of the city. Some of their laws are quite singular. One of them prohibits the riding of horses through the streets faster than a walk; and every transgressor is fined two dollars.

Of this regulation I had experimental proof; for, soon after coming on shore, the sergeant and myself went to a livery-stable and got a horse to ride round the city. As we were leaving, the keeper told us of this regulation, that we might govern ourselves accordingly. We had been some time out, and were coming back, my horse prancing along, but not trotting. Soon one of the police came up, stopped my horse, and reached out his hand, saying, "*Dos pesos, dos pesos*" (two dollars). I asked what he wanted that for. "Because my horse was trotting," he said. At this instant some noise was made by my comrade

that caused the guard to look round, when I put spurs to my horse. The animal started with all vengeance for the stable, and I let him go just where he chose, as he knew the way better than I did. When I started the policeman blew his whistle and followed after. This signal was followed by others; and presently I saw a host standing in the street, ready to intercept me as I passed. But such was the speed of the animal that it was impossible; and they also followed after. My horse ran through the market, jumped over fruit stands, knocking them here and there, and frightened some women and children not a little. At last he came to the stable, where he stopped. I jumped off, ran through into a back street, then went round the block, and came again to the stable. There I found over a hundred policemen looking for me. As I had just come in from the main street, I was not suspected. My comrade now came in, but we did not speak to each other until after we had left the stable, when we had a hearty laugh at outwitting the police.

In the afternoon we went into the country a short distance, but did not see enough to make it worth while giving a description of it. I will only say that, from the information I gathered, it is one of the most healthy climates in the world. The soil is immensely fertile, and the mountains produce large quantities of gold and silver. Its mines are said to be as rich as any in the world.

We remained here fifteen days, when we again set sail. Our passage now was rougher than it had been. We were nearing the Southern Ocean, and a violent

gale drove us into the regions of almost perpetual darkness. We were far south of Cape Horn, and the day was only six hours long. The weather was the coldest that I ever experienced. This place is justly termed the terror of sailors.

In about three weeks time we came into warmer weather. The winds had moderated, and we glided smoothly yet rapidly along. No stop was made at any port until we reached Norfolk, Va., where we landed on the eleventh of October.

As it regards the prediction of the surgeon of the Lexington, who said that I would not live to get home, I have only to say, that I was not only alive, but in better health than I had been for some time before. I now weighed one hundred and sixty pounds; when I came on board at San Blas, I weighed but one hundred and fifteen. I remained here a few days, and then went to Washington, where my dues were paid me. I then returned to my friends, who had long mourned me as dead.

THE END.

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